

# THE INDYPENDENT

## ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT MARCHES UPHILL

BY JOHN TARLETON

Eight NYU students crashed the stage Oct. 9 at MTV's Total Request Live to deliver an impromptu shout-out to "the people of the world" calling for the war on Iraq to stop before it starts. A day later, some of the same students occupied Hillary Clinton's Midtown office with great fanfare as the senator prepared to cast a "yes" vote for war.

"People are going to die for no reason and we did what we could to try and stop it," said Justin Rowe, one of the students who planned the actions.

The students' extracurricular activities came days after Not In Our Name rallies around the country, largely organized by the Revolutionary Communist Party, drew large numbers of Americans (including 20,000 New Yorkers) to protest the impending attack on Iraq.

A flurry of teach-ins, sit-ins, marches, vigils and "die-ins" have followed not only in major cities but also in unlikely hotbeds of dissent like Augusta, Ga.; Ellensburg, Wash.; and Sandpoint, Idaho. With the economy tanking and the majority of Americans opposed to a unilateral attack against Iraq, a potentially broad-based peace movement has emerged a year into the "war on terror."

### Can it last?

Eleven years ago, public opinion was deeply divided throughout the country in advance of the first Gulf War. A burgeoning anti-war movement saw protests of 30,000 in Washington, D.C. and as many as 100,000 people in San Francisco. The day after the bombing of Iraq began, thousands of people shut down San Francisco's federal building and then took over the Bay Bridge during rush hour.

But a war that some thought would last for years (like Vietnam) ended in 46 days and the movement quickly collapsed after the Pentagon's lightning-quick victory. The movement was also plagued by ideological disputes between the Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East, a front group of the Workers World Party (WWP), and the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East, which was composed of more traditional peace and jus-

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## WHY WAR? WHY NOW?

### A LETTER FROM BAGHDAD

BY RAMZI KYSIA

BAGHDAD, IRAQ — Living in Baghdad, you wouldn't know there was a war on. The streets bustle with people on their way to work or school. In the evenings, the parks are full of kids playing soccer and people visiting with family and friends.

There are no tanks in the streets, no soldiers marching, no civil defense drills, and — other than foreigners like us — no one here seems to be stocking up on food or water. Is it denial? Disbelief? Despair? I honestly don't know.

It is painful that Baghdad is so beautiful. There's a unique and striking blend of traditional and modern architecture. I love the city's parks, its wide, tree-lined boulevards, each avenue sprouting date palms and poplars. This is truly a green city.

I told a cab driver that Baghdad was a beautiful city. He just looked hard at me. "No," he said, "Baghdad is not beautiful. Baghdad is tired."

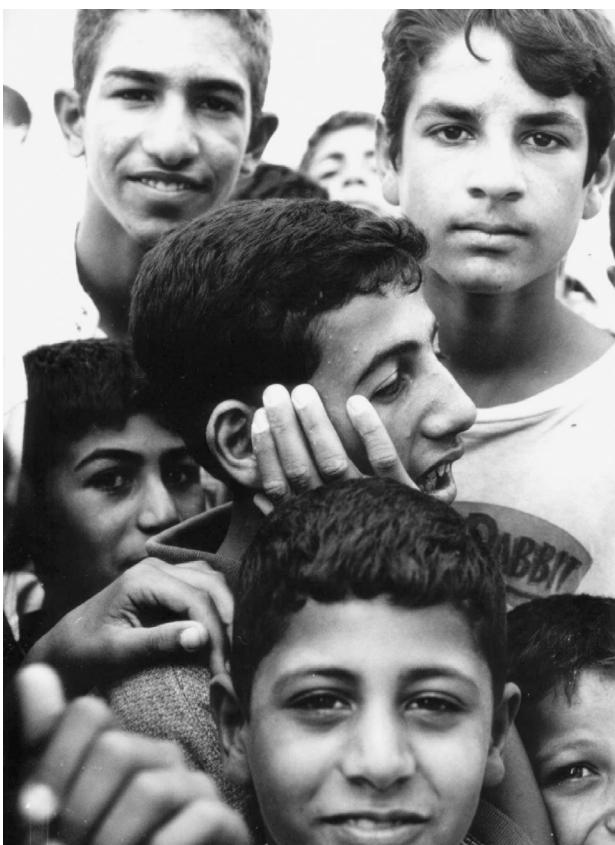
We hear it over and over again — just below the surface — a melody of melancholy, resignation and fear. People quietly complain, "What more can America do to us?"

We visit a high school, and the kids want to make absolutely sure we really understand that they're not natural-born killers or terrorists. A teacher tells us his eight-year-old asks him every day if today is the day he is going to die.

I am in Iraq with a half-dozen other American volunteers from Voices in the Wilderness: Eric and Farah, college students from Illinois and Pennsylvania; Nathan, a recent journalism graduate from Washington; Jon, a maintenance man from Chicago; Henry, a paramedic from South Carolina; and Joe, a Catholic Worker from New York.

More are joining us. By the end of October, there will be over 30 people on our team. By December, our numbers will be over 100. We are here to tell the stories of the Iraqi people; to put our lives on the line to stop this war.

Our modest hotel isn't close to anything "strategic." Our risks are the same as the other 5 million people in Baghdad, the other



Boys in Abu Floo's Village, Iraq - see photo essay page 8.

24 million people in Iraq. As our team's numbers grow, we will turn the hotel into our own hostel - living five or six to a room.

Ask an Iraqi about "liberation," and she will laugh at you. It's bitter mirth. If the United States doesn't bomb the civilian infrastructure again, and if the government falls fast, and if the army doesn't break-up along ethnic and religious lines — then only a few thousand innocent people will be killed when George Bush starts his war.

But if Bush bombs the water and power systems like his dad did in 1991, tens of thousands will die from the resulting epidemics. If the army falls apart, there could be a civil war that makes past conflicts in Lebanon or Bosnia look like schoolyard brawls. And if the Oil-for-Food program is disrupted for more than a few weeks, UNICEF warns there will be countrywide famine.

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SUZANNE KAHR

## FROM THE NEWSWIRE

*Here's a sampling of recent posts and comments to the NYC and global newswires. Each Independent Media Center website features open publishing software that allows readers to post articles, stories, photographs, audio clips and video footage to our newswire. Viewers can also log comments that appear below articles allowing for open debate. To read more or to post your own article, visit [www.nyc.indymedia.org](http://www.nyc.indymedia.org) or [www.indymedia.org](http://www.indymedia.org).*

### *Thousands of Portlanders Protest War on Iraq*

Oct. 5 — 11,500 Portland residents gathered downtown today as part of the nationwide Not In Our Name campaign to demand No War in Iraq. Cloudy gray skies were offset by a multitude of colorful signs and banners, loud drums and chants, and an energetic spirit. The crowd assembled in the South Park blocks for speeches and music and then marched through downtown for more of the same. For over 40 minutes, people passed by in a seemingly endless stream.

[www.nyc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article\\_id=33692](http://www.nyc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=33692)

### *Bombspotting at U.S. Airbase in Belgium*

Oct. 5 — As the United States is forcing new military inspections on Iraq, over 2,000 Belgian peace activists landed at the military base at Kleine Brogel today, in order to perform a "civil inspection." They trespassed on and occupied the base, which is used to store illegal U.S. nuclear weapons. In spite of the massive military and police presence, lots of activists succeeded in getting on the base. According to the police, 1,034 people were arrested on and around the base.

[www.dc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article\\_id=33945](http://www.dc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=33945)

### *Villagers Weather Settler Violence for a Successful Day of Olive Harvesting*

BY KATE CRANE

Oct. 19 — Soon after the harvesters arrived, around 6:30 a.m. local time, a small band of settlers from the Tapuah settlement arrived and immediately began throwing stones and shooting at the Palestinians. Some internationals attempted to calm the violent settlers, while others filmed the scene with digital cameras. The entire group of harvesters then staged a sit-in in the groves, remaining quiet and peaceful as they waited for Israeli police to come. The settlers eventually left of their own volition, and the Palestinians were able to complete a day of harvesting.

The previous day, Wednesday, a smaller group of farmers and activists attempted to harvest, but were driven away by settlers from the Tapuah settlement. Soldiers then declared the groves a "closed military zone" and prevented anyone from returning. The District Coordinating Liaison of the Palestinian and Israeli communities then negotiated with the soldiers. The resulting agreement: soldiers would come on Thursday to protect the Palestinians as they picked olives.

After the successful harvesting, a soldier told the departing Palestinians, "Today, you've won."

[www.nyc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article\\_id=35480](http://www.nyc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=35480)

### *Reasons*

BY CHRISTOPHER DAY

Oct. 18 — There is a sector of the U.S. ruling class that can smell that this war is going to go bad and they don't want to see a repeat of the mass radicalization that took place during the war on Vietnam. They realize that there is going to be an anti-war movement, so they want a nice docile anti-war movement that doesn't call into question the system that makes war inevitable. Anti-capitalists and revolutionaries who have problems with the International Action Center or Revolutionary Communist Party should find ways to express those differences that don't make common cause with liberals dedicated to the maintenance of this rotten system.

[www.nyc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article\\_id=35417](http://www.nyc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=35417)

### *The Laughing Tailor's Bloc*

BY FSN

Oct. 19 — His entire administration is filled with pompous asses like Rove, Cheney, Ashcroft, Rumsfeld and Rice. And let's not forget the propaganda wing of the White House — Bill O'Reilly goes on speaking tours. So do local yokels like Jeb, Trent Lott, and Tom Delay. They even let Ari Fleischer out for an occasional public-spewing engagement in order to grind the party organ. Because they are a disciplined lot and well-trained in the art of manipulating outrage for political advantage, they invariably respond to angry protesters by waxing poetic on the First Amendment. "This is a shining example of how great life is in a free country," they gush. "God bless America." (Of course, this is just before they have everyone carted off to jail.) But how, I wonder, would the Bushistas handle a snicker-in instead of a sit-in?

[www.nyc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article\\_id=35534](http://www.nyc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=35534)

### *Vietnam: The Soldier's Revolt*

BY JOEL GEIER

Oct. 19 — The most neglected aspect of the Vietnam War is the soldiers' revolt — the mass upheaval from below that unraveled the American army. It is a great reality check in an era when the U.S. touts itself as an invincible nation. For this reason, the soldiers' revolt has been written out of official history. Yet it was a crucial part of the massive antiwar movement whose activity helped the Vietnamese people in their struggle to free Vietnam from U.S. domination.

[www.nyc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article\\_id=35538](http://www.nyc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=35538)

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# FULL METAL CHICKEN

## REPUBLICANS BETTER AT STARTING WARS THAN FIGHTING 'EM

By EMILY REINHARDT

"Chickenhawk" sounds like a Frankenstein experiment gone awry. Actually, it refers to an administration that's for the birds.

"Chickenhawks" include Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld and many of the other familiar names in the Bush peanut gallery who pine for a war that others will have to fight, though they themselves remained safely out of harm's way when they had a chance to see combat in their youth.

This administration is lauded for its "military credibility" but it is a false premise, based on its jingoism and cowboy mentality. More than 13,000 stories have been written about Bill Clinton's infamous "draft dodging," while only 50 stories have been written about Bush's lack of service. (Source: *Lexis Nexis*)

### George W. Bush, Jr.

Job: President, Commander-in-Chief

Year Born: 1946

War Avoided: Vietnam

Reason: Deferment, Texas Air National Guard



Impatient to invade Iraq, George W. Bush was equally impatient to avoid Vietnam. He leapfrogged over thousands of others in 1968 to join the Texas Air National Guard. With only 12 days left on his student deferment, Bush was sworn in the same day he applied. Why the National Guard was so anxious for Bush to join is a mystery; he received the lowest score possible on the aptitude test. Not only impatient, Bush also marked his time in the National Guard with laziness. He was grounded for not taking his physical, he was absent from many required drills and he actually went AWOL for six months.

### Dick Cheney

Job: Vice-President

Year Born: 1941

War Avoided: Vietnam

Reason: "other priorities," "too busy in the sixties"



Spending 1959-1965 in college and grad school, Dick Cheney had a total of four student deferments by the time he graduated. By this time, he was married to his ultra-conservative wife, Lynne, the marriage keeping him away from Vietnam. In October 1965, selective service changed the draft status of childless married men, equating their eligibility with single men. Just one month later, Lynne Cheney was expecting a bundle of

joy: in January 1966, Cheney received 3-A status. It was a rare occurrence of Dick Cheney making love and not war.

### John Ashcroft

Job: Attorney General

Year Born: 1942

War Avoided: Vietnam

Reason: "held critical job"



Ashcroft's "critical job" was teaching business law at Southwest Missouri State University. After repeated student deferments, Ashcroft graduated from law school in 1967. A family friend set up the teaching gig for him, somehow deemed "critical" when only 264,000 out of 35 million draftable men were granted such status.

### Donald Rumsfeld

Job: Secretary of Defense

Year Born: 1932

War Avoided: Korea

Reason: Student Deferment



Rumsfeld holds the distinction of being both the youngest and the oldest Secretary of Defense, having held the position under both Presidents Ford (1975-77) and Bush Jr. (2001-?). However, he has never seen combat experience. Rumsfeld was an undergraduate at Princeton while the Korean War raged from 1950 to 1953. While "Rummy" pursued his studies inside Princeton's ivy-covered walls, 5.7 million Americans served in Korea. A total of 36,516 were killed and another 103,284 were wounded in the conflict. Meanwhile, Rumsfeld received student deferments. He later served as a naval aviator from 1954 to 1957 before beginning his rise to power.

### Tom DeLay

Job: Representative (R-Tex)

Year Born: 1947

War Avoided: Vietnam

Reason: Deferment



According to Tom DeLay, he and fellow chickenhawks like Dan Quayle desperately wanted to fight in Vietnam, but minorities had taken all the well-paying military gigs in order to escape the ghetto, depriving patriotic young men of their chance to serve. A relatively unknown DeLay said this in 1988 to a crowd of reporters, one of whom was then prompted to ask, "Who is this idiot?" Instead of fighting his patriotic war, DeLay was handling enemies more his mental size:

termites, cockroaches and fleas as an exterminator.

### Bill O'Reilly

Job: Fox News commentator

Year Born: 1949

War Avoided: Vietnam

Reason: Deferment



The devout Clinton-hater actually had a trajectory much like the object of his abhorrence. Both attended school in New England. O'Reilly was in London for his junior year of college, 1969-1970, one year after Bill Clinton was at Oxford. Though he lambasted Clinton for avoiding service, O'Reilly kept up his student deferments and, like so many of his right-wing colleagues, never saw action.

### Rush Limbaugh

Job: Radio "Personality"

Year Born: 1951

War Avoided: Vietnam

Reason: Various butt problems



No wonder the zaftig GOP darling sounds so cranky all the time. He's had a life of major problems in the posterior. Different sources list different causes for Rush's medical deferment; either it's "ingrown follicles on his bottom" or the more forward "anal cysts." Limbaugh, it seems, has always been a pain in the ass.

### Paul Wolfowitz

Job: Deputy Secretary of Defense

Year Born: 1944

War Avoided: Vietnam

Reason: Student Deferment



This arch-hawk is the #2 man at the Pentagon and a leading proponent of "regime change" and "pre-emptive strikes." Wolfowitz, 58, graduated from Cornell in 1965 with a degree in mathematics and received a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Chicago in 1972. "Student deferments kept him out of the military draft during the Vietnam War," notes *The New York Times*, "and he looks back on that war with a kind of scholarly detachment."

— John Tarleton contributed to this report.

## GULF WAR 1: MEMORIES OF DEATH AND MAYHEM

By JOHN TARLETON

Charles Sheehan-Miles finished basic training for the U.S. Army in August of 1991. Two weeks later he was deployed to Saudi Arabia with the 24th Infantry Division. He was 18.

Raised in Atlanta, Sheehan-Miles comes from a long line of military men dating back to the Revolutionary War. He was eager to serve and protect his country, and spent eight months in the Persian Gulf theater, history's most toxic battlefield.

Sheehan-Miles was exposed to smoke from hundreds of oil-well fires. Hundreds of thousands of other U.S. troops were exposed to depleted uranium from their own army's munitions and to chemical warfare agents including sarin, cyclosarin and mustard gases when large stockpiles of Saddam Hussein's biological and chemical weapons were destroyed. Thousands of soldiers were also injected with experimental anthrax vaccines. In the war's final days, Sheehan-Miles machine-gunned fleeing Iraqi soldiers who had caught fire when one of their tanker trucks exploded near his unit. The experience haunted him and in December

1992 he was discharged from the Army as a conscientious objector.

"I had nightmares for years about the incident," said Sheehan-Miles, who has since written an acclaimed novel about his Gulf War experiences, *Prayer at Rumayla*. "The human reaction to a situation like that is to grab a fire extinguisher or to throw a blanket on someone."

One hundred and forty-eight U.S. soldiers — as well as 50,000 Iraqis — were killed in the first Gulf War. Some 7,758 more Gulf War vets have died since then, according to an April 2002 report by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Sheehan-Miles suffered lung and ear infections for the first couple of years after he returned home. Many of his former comrades-in-arms suffered more debilitating Gulf War-related illnesses that the government took years to acknowledge. Of the 697,000 troops who served in the Gulf War, 156,000 (or 22.3 percent) currently receive assistance for service-related medical disabilities.

"It was a toxic battlefield and we were exposed to a lot of junk.... There was not necessarily anything mysterious about all this," said Sheehan-Miles, who also founded the National Gulf War Resource Center

(NGWRC) in 1995. Now 31, he lives in Reston, Va., with his wife and two small children.

Sheehan-Miles has watched with increasing concern in recent months as the Bush administration calls for war. He and other vets are concerned that a new generation of U.S. soldiers will be exposed to similarly toxic battle conditions while safeguards remain inadequate.

"We're hurtling headlong into a war with Iraq without adequately addressing the mistakes of the past," says Steve Robinson, NGWRC executive director.

While the NGWRC doesn't take an official position on the war, Sheehan-Miles and a couple of his buddies have started a web site ([www.veteransforcommon-sense.org](http://www.veteransforcommon-sense.org)) that is meant to raise public awareness of the dangerous course U.S. leaders are charting.

"I think the military has become very remote to us. We now have a small, professional army that goes out and fights our wars for us," Sheehan-Miles notes. "But the cost of going to war is far more than most people realize."

# PROTESTS MOUNT AS MEDIA LOOK THE OTHER WAY

BY MIKE BURKE

During the past month, scores of protests have been staged across the country and the globe against another Gulf War. Most have been largely ignored by mainstream press outlets such as the *Washington Post*, which recently acknowledged its failure to cover the anti-war movement adequately.

"Whatever one thinks about the wisdom of a new war, once it starts it is too late to air arguments that should have been aired before," wrote *Post* ombudsman Michael Getler on Oct. 6. Below is an overview of some of the anti-war actions that you may not have heard about:

9/24: The city of Santa Cruz, Calif., passes a resolution opposing war in Iraq, becoming the first city in the country to do so. San Francisco; Oakland; Berkeley; Seattle; Kalamazoo, Mich.; Carrboro, N.C.; and Ithaca, N.Y.; have since passed similar resolutions.

9/27: Anti-war protesters greet President Bush in Denver, Colo. Organizers expect a few hundred for the rally; 3,500 show up.

9/27: Activists in Minnesota end a four-day sit-in at Sen. Paul Wellstone's local office. Two weeks later, Wellstone joins 22 other senators opposing the Iraq war resolution.

9/28: In London, up to 400,000 take part in Britain's largest peace demonstration since the Vietnam War.

9/29: More than 3,000 antiwar protesters show up at Dick Cheney's house in Washington, D.C.

10/5: In Italy, over 1.5 million participate in anti-war rallies across the country.

10/6: More than 100,000 protest across the United States at dozens of rallies organized by the Not In Our Name coalition. In New York, 20,000 fill the East Meadow of Central Park. At least 10,000 gather in Los Angeles and San Francisco.

10/7: At least 2,000 rally outside the Cincinnati Museum Center to protest President Bush's primetime speech on Iraq. Organizers report that Cincinnati hadn't seen such a large peace demonstration in decades.

10/8: Some 500 protest outside a \$1,000-a-head Republican fundraiser featuring President Bush in Knoxville, Tennessee.

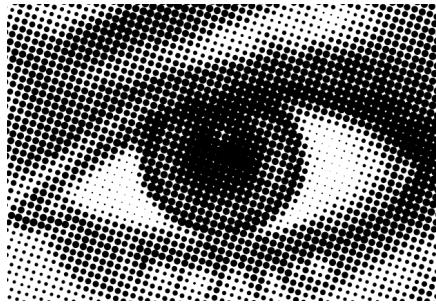
10/9: Up to 30,000 march in Seattle, marking the city's second mass peace rally in recent days.

10/13: White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer is welcomed back to his alma mater, Middlebury College in Vermont, by nearly 900 protesters. Days earlier Fleischer called for, in violation of international law, the assassination of Saddam Hussein.

10/14: Two days after bombings in Bali killed nearly 200, including many Australians, over 45,000 march in Melbourne to protest Australia's potential involvement in another Gulf War. Protest organizers cite the Bali bombings as a reason why we need a different approach to conflict other than violence and war.

10/15: A standing-room crowd of 700 gather in the rural Massachusetts town of Deerfield (pop. 4,750) to hear former U.N. weapons inspector Scott Ritter talk about Iraq. Ritter predicts 20,000 to 30,000 Americans will die if the U.S. invades Iraq.

10/26: Major anti-war protests are scheduled in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco. Organizers have predicted crowds up to 150,000.



## SPYING

### NYPD seeks to free itself from Handschu restraints

BY DIANA WURN

In the midst of your fellow demonstrators' shouts of "No Blood for Oil" at a future anti-war rally, you may notice something odd. It might be that your new activist friend looks a little out of place. Or it could be that once in a while he drops his head to his shirt collar and whispers something like: "Operation City Storm is clear. Send in the eagle."

He may be a cop.

The 1985 Handschu Agreement makes the New York Police Department (NYPD) the only police force in America that operates with clear limitations on how and when it can spy on political groups. But if the NYPD has its way, that could all change very soon.

Late last month, NYPD lawyers filed papers in federal district court arguing for a removal of all limitations from the Handschu Agreement and unfettered police authority to monitor political expression.

Currently, Handschu requires the NYPD to obtain advance permission from a special panel before infiltrating political groups. If police have evidence that a crime may take place, they have 48 hours to file a request with the Handschu Authority panel, which can approve an operation. Police must return for new authorization if they wish to continue surveillance beyond 30 days.

There are limitations with Handschu, though. The biggest one may be the composition of the panel. With two police officers and one civilian appointed by the mayor, odds are stacked in favor of approval for police surveillance. Even so, Handschu makes New Yorkers the only Americans currently protected from overzealous local police.

If the Handschu Agreement is rescinded to suit the NYPD's desires, though, New Yorkers can expect increased political surveillance and photography at political events, says Nancy Chang, senior litigation attorney for the Center for Constitutional Rights.

"One problem with police monitoring of groups is that it has a chilling effect on freedom of expression," Chang said.

The chilling effect could extend from participation in religious activities to speaking out against the impending war on Iraq.

Chang points out that people engage in self-censorship when they know they are being watched and their activities recorded.

Elimination of the Handschu decree would sacrifice the protections that now exist. "They are significant pro-

tections," said Christopher Dunn of the New York Civil Liberties Union. It would also become more difficult to track police activity, Dunn said.

Handschr is more than a formality, argues City University of New York School of Law Professor Franklin Siegel. It "creates a paper trail. Over time, if a party believes an action has been unjust, they can look up who authorized it," he said. If the decree is removed, that paper trail will be eliminated.

The initiative to repeal Handschu recalls Attorney General John Ashcroft's wish to remove restrictions that have previously prevented FBI agents from gathering information by spying on law-abiding political and religious groups. Last year's U.S.A. PATRIOT Act has also dampened dissent against government policies by significantly easing restrictions on surveillance and widening the scope of who can be monitored, particularly for alleged terrorism.

With their request to the court, New York police are now seeking similar freedom to conduct wide-ranging surveillance, with equally wide potential for abuses. It was activists in the 1970s who demanded a paper trail on police harassment of political groups that spawned the Handschu Agreement.

The Handschu Agreement grew from a lawsuit filed by civil rights groups in 1971. The complaint alleged that a branch of the Police Department called the Security and Investigation Section had violated the First, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Eighth, Ninth and Fourteenth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution through activities that monitored groups then critical of the government, including the Black Panthers.

The activists' lawsuit outlined seven categories of violations, including use of informants, infiltration of groups, illegal interrogations, overt surveillance, summary punishment, intelligence gathering and electronic surveillance.

The court documents asserted that police spies secretly infiltrated groups and "provoked, solicited and induced members of lawful political and social groups to engage in unlawful activities."

According to the complaint, officers not only urged participation in criminal activity, but funded it. Members of political groups were encouraged by undercover officers to participate in armed robbery and to plan the bombing of a government agency, the plaintiffs asserted.

In response, New York's police commissioner at the time suggested that if those actions occurred, they were mere "aberrations."

Now, 17 years after the lawsuit culminated in the Handschu Agreement, today's Police Commissioner, Raymond Kelly, says Handschu has tied his department's hands in its efforts to spy on terrorists. However, when confronted by *Newsday*'s Leonard Levitt, Kelly was unable to site one actual example of how Handschu guidelines were hindering police in their fight against terrorism.

It could take months or even years before a decision is made on the police request that was presented to Judge Charles S. Haight, Jr. Police promise a public meeting to permit citizen comments on the matter, but no date has been announced yet.

"It will be long and contentious and very public," said Siegel, who will work in opposition to the police as class counsel on the case. He cautioned that "inflammatory and urgent" language is used in the brief.

"You say terrorism and everyone gets weak in the knees," Siegel asserted.

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# FIGHTING AN UNHOLY WAR

## RELIGIOUS ANTI-WAR GROUPS FACE HAWKS AND SECULAR SKEPTICS

BY ANNIE VENESKY

With regular Bible studies held at the White House, many say the Bush administration is selling its "War on Terrorism," and now its proposed war on Iraq as a religious crusade.

Bush and Co.'s special brand of evangelistic psychopathism has seduced many Americans into buying a divinely ordained war against "evildoers," which now includes Saddam Hussein, who threaten "freedom and democracy."

There are many dissenting people of faith, however, who aren't buying this war, and have been able to galvanize a burgeoning opposition to the administration's plans.

In fact, leaders of all the major religions have come out against the war on Iraq. Even Bush's own United Methodist church has "launched a scathing attack on his plans for war" according to an Oct. 20 report in the *London Observer*.

The Vatican, with the National and World Councils of Churches and leaders of 48 denominations, submitted a letter to Bush in early September denouncing pre-emptive strikes. Interfaith religious leaders have since lobbied intensely on Capitol Hill for U.S. cooperation with the international community on the issue.

Building on their work in non-violence training and international peace work, faith-based peace and justice organizations such as Pax Christi USA, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and the Fellowship of Reconciliation have helped to organize educational campaigns and grassroots actions — teach-ins, rallies, peace vigils and Congressional phone and email campaigns.

Not that the U.S.'s predominantly religious population (with 81 percent of Americans identifying with a specific religion) would ever hear of this on CNN.

Rabbi Michael Lerner, of *Tikkun* magazine, a Jewish social justice publication, believes there is potential in

fomenting a decidedly religious anti-war presence amidst the greater public.

"There are many Americans who respond to religious communities but don't respond to other dimensions of the left. They are more likely to listen to criticisms of war when framed in terms of abiding values that they relate to," he said.

"Pro-war forces make religious communities less powerful by not giving attention to them," Lerner added.

In Muslim communities, getting an anti-war message out has been even more difficult, according to Iftekhar Hai, of the San Francisco-based United Muslims of America and the Interfaith Alliance. "We have taken a stand within the religious community, but in a more quiet way," said Hai. "There is so much anti-Muslim sentiment right now, we are very fearful."

On the other hand, the oppressive political climate has "forced more Muslim communities to work in coalitions," he continued. "Before, our organization was the only one working that way. Now a lot of mosques have opened their doors."

With Congress having given Bush the go-ahead, and grumblings of "another Vietnam" brewing, the real question now is to what extent religious anti-war activism can catalyze and sustain a broad constituency — a goal which relies on collaboration with the non-religious left.

Like the corporate media, says Lerner, the leftist press has also blacked out religious voices. The secular left "has a knee-jerk, anti-religious, anti-spiritual instinct," he noted.

Jim White, a clergy member at St. Mary's Church and the Congregation for Peace and Justice, agreed, stating that the non-religious left tends to "write off people of faith."

Carmen Trotta, a Roman Catholic peace activist who has worked with the Catholic Worker and War Resisters League for over 15 years, wonders what ultimately drives secular activists. "One's social stance," he said, "ought not

to be about one's self...If it's just about you and me, it's almost certainly a utilitarian equation."

Nonetheless, he feels it is necessary to "get away from thinking in terms of a religious/non-religious split." It is better, he says, to open the lines of communication between anti-war communities.

Eric LeCompte, Outreach Coordinator for School of the Americas (SOA) Watch, which fights for the closure of the U.S. Army School of Americas in Georgia, says he hasn't seen the negative interactions other religious activists have noticed.

"[Religious and secular] groups may have differences in terms of points of reference...[but] these two groups have really similar values," he said.

"There has been some amazing mobilization going on surrounding this [SOA] issue," LeCompte. "Because of this, many people have been able to become active on Iraq. It's an exciting cross-pollination of movements."

Indeed, SOA Watch may be a model for a radically new kind of anti-war movement that embraces a global perspective and is not narrow in its view — a sorely needed transformation, according to Mary Lord of AFSC.

"We need to build a broader peace movement that's connected to Europe and the Global South," Lord said. "But it's not going to happen in a week. Even if this war is prevented, there'll be another.... Militarism has become a religion in the U.S. and outside, even in very poor countries."

With many questions still unanswered, one thing is becoming clear as war both looms and proliferates: The new anti-war movement must address itself not to any one war but rather to a growing global security state.

As Lord advises, "It's important not to become cynical and to have long-term views — religious and non-religious alike."

## Peace Movement Marching

continued from cover

tice groups. The two groups clashed over whether it was appropriate to criticize Iraq for invading Kuwait and whether U.N.-imposed sanctions were an acceptable alternative to going to war. At one point they held separate marches on Washington on successive weekends. Other recent conflicts (Kosovo 1998, Afghanistan 2001) ended before strong anti-war movements could coalesce. This time around, anti-war organizers want to stay focused on resisting a common enemy.

"The machinery we're up against is so big that there's room for everyone to support each other even if it's not possible to work under one national umbrella coalition," says Leslie Cagan, who was coordinator for the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East.

Anti-war organizing is also accelerating in communities of color, which contribute a disproportionate percentage of the troops to the U.S. armed forces and have the most to lose from a war that would undermine spending on domestic social programs. One group, the Harlem Anti-War Coalition, formed following a Sept. 14 teach-in at St. Mary's Church sponsored by the Harlem Tenants Council (HTC). Organizers are uncertain how predominantly white peace groups will respond to new sources of leadership in the anti-war movement.

"It will be very interesting to see if people even want to talk about this, much less do something about it," says HTC executive director Nellie Hester Bailey, who began her career as an organizer in 1965 in Alabama with the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

The next big protest will occur Oct. 26 in Washington,

D.C. Two more WWP extensions, International A.N.S.W.E.R. (Act Now to Stop War and Racism) and the International Action Center (IAC), are organizing the event, which is expected to attract tens of thousands of people seeking to register their dismay with the war and Congress's acquiescence in the face of the Bush administration's bellicose demands.

"The anti-war movement has to create the climate that will make politicians stand more strongly for an alternative course," former 60's anti-war leader and former California State Senator Tom Hayden told the *Independent*. "It is not only the invasion and occupation of Iraq, but the massive military buildup behind an unlimited war on terrorism that will concern us for the next several years."

Grassroots anti-war movements can expect little acknowledgement from the corporate media. In the five-month run-up to the 1991 Persian Gulf War, the three major network news shows provided 2,855 minutes of coverage, one percent of which was devoted to reporting grassroots dissent, according to Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting (FAIR), a media watchdog group. And while web sites like commondreams.org, alternet.org, anti-war.com, zmag.org, iraqjournal.org and broadcast shows like Democracy Now! and Free Speech TV now offer a steady stream of critical reporting on the war, the media establishment still pursues a more limited discussion.

For instance, the Oct. 14 issue of *Time* magazine featured a "debate" between retired General Wesley Clark ("Let's Wait to Attack") and former Reagan

Administration official Kenneth Adelman ("No, Let's Not Waste Any Time").

"It's at times like these we see really skewed ideas, [that] news is what powerful people say it is," says Rachel Coen, a media analyst for FAIR.

In the rush to war, little has been said by either the mass media or politicians about how a military occupation of Iraq would put U.S.-based energy companies in control of several trillion dollars of proven oil reserves. Hayden suggests that the anti-war movement make common cause with the movement against corporate-led globalization that first burst into prominence in North America three years ago during the "Battle of Seattle."

"It's the same fight," he says.

For that fight to be sustainable, Mark Haim, another 60's veteran and longtime community organizer in Columbia, Mo., says it is essential that activists create an outward-looking "culture of resistance" rooted in alternative institutions and networks of mutual support that weave together people of different communities and generations.

"I envision a resistance movement that will express itself in myriad ways beyond marching on Washington, D.C.," Haim said. "It would be for a whole different political-cultural paradigm. It would be a culture in which people are more overtly, politically active and see their daily actions through a political prism."

For ongoing coverage of grassroots anti-war organizing around the world, see [www.indymedia.org](http://www.indymedia.org).

# LABOR'S OPPORTUNITY

BY IMC STAFF

With 13 million members, organized labor has the potential to become one of the most powerful voices for peace and justice.

On Oct. 7 AFL-CIO president John J. Sweeney issued a statement calling for dealing with "Hussein's lawlessness in a manner that enforces international law" and respects the United Nations. And, in contrast to the labor federation's stance during the Vietnam War (see article below) it has allowed room for local and regional affiliates to take independent positions.

Most rank-and-file union members don't think Bush has justified the need for an attack. Like most Americans, they are taking the middle road. While they may not like Saddam Hussein, many do not see enough reason to intervene in the affairs of a sovereign nation.

That very few unions have taken a stance in support of the Bush administration is also important. Even among those unions that have, there isn't a vocal, pro-war section of organized labor, as there was during the Vietnam War.

Many union members are waiting to see how the next few months play out. But in an encouraging trend, some have come out against the war.

An example of a labor-led initiative to oppose war came from the Washington State Central Labor Council (CLC) AFL-CIO. The Washington State CLC, representing close to half a million trade unionists, held its convention Aug. 19-22, in Spokane, Wash.

At that convention it was resolved that the Washington State CLC "opposes the U.S. government's open-ended 'war on terrorism' and [urges all its affiliates] to pressure Bush and Congress to stop the war, ... assist laid-off workers, restore and expand services, and promote global justice by providing humanitarian and economic aid."

The California Federation of Teachers (CFT) at a recent State Council meeting also passed a resolution against war on Iraq. The resolution said, "the CFT goes on record as strenuously opposing the Bush administration's march toward war with Iraq. ..." The resolution also urged all affiliates to encourage their members to do the same.

The CFT, an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), represents more than 100,000 teachers and school employees and has a history of being involved in social, political and economic struggles.

In a phone interview, Margaret Shelleda, Assistant to the President of CFT, said, "Bush has shown no evidence that Iraq poses a threat to the U.S. And a war would only exacerbate the situation in the Middle East." She added, "unilateral action is a violation of international standards."

On the top of Shelleda's priorities list were domestic issues. "Twenty five percent of California's budget is in deficit," she said. "Education isn't getting enough money. Hardly any schools have nurses. And Bush is on the brink of committing billions of dollars and thousands of lives without attempting a diplomatic approach."

Most recently on Oct. 1, the Executive Committee of AFL-CIO Pride at Work, a constituency group of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender union members, passed a resolution against "pre-emptive war strikes on Iraq or any other country."

The list of official AFL-CIO bodies openly taking a stance against war is small now. But the list is growing.

Independent bodies made up of union officers and rank-and-file union members seeking official recognition from their local, regional and national unions are forming much more quickly.

New York City Labor Against the War (NYCLAW) is a perfect example. The peace movement has found an important ally in NYCLAW, which formed weeks after the attacks of Sept. 11. According to Michel Letwin, President of the Association of Legal Aid Attorneys, UAW Local 2325, NYCLAW has been "both an anti-war pole within labor and a labor pole in the anti-war movement."

Detroit Labor for Peace and Justice (DLPJ) is another example. Originally formed in response to the bombing of Afghanistan, DLPJ issued a Labor Day statement in the *Metro Detroit Labor News*. It said, "We condemn the horrific terrorist attack on Sept. 11. Yet the war in Afghanistan has brought further suffering. ... We therefore oppose the expansion of the War on Terror to include military action in Iraq ... or any other country."

In a phone interview Paul Felton of DLPJ said, "Bush's foreign policy has little to do with helping the American people. It is designed to further corporate interests."

Felton, a member of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) Area Local 480-481 for more than 22 years, suggested that the labor movement as a whole has been "cautious" and added, "This is the perfect opportunity for labor to break from the legacy of uncritically supporting U.S. foreign policy." He continued, "Sometimes labor participation in the peace movement seems too small," but the growing response many unions and union members have shown is "certainly a healthy beginning."

**LABOR ACTIVISTS** joined with anti-globalization activists — will they add also their numbers to the anti-war movement?



KATHLEEN WHALEN

## ...AND ITS DUBIOUS PAST

BY IMC STAFF

Organized labor has been an important force in U.S. history. It secured the 40-hour work week, collective bargaining, workplace safety laws and social security. In foreign policy, however, as the history of the AFL-CIO demonstrates, it has often played a sordid role.

Following the Cuban revolution in 1959, the AFL-CIO established the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD).

George Meany, president of the AFL-CIO at the time, was proud of the support the AIFLD received from the "largest corporations in the United States ... Rockefeller, ITT, Kennecott, Standard Oil, Shell Petroleum."

"Although some of these companies have no connection whatsoever to U.S. trade unions," Meany said, "they are all agreed that it was really in the U.S. interest to help develop free trade unions in Latin America."

Many independent unions, particularly in Latin America, were subsequently subverted and destroyed by AIFLD. More than 9,000 Chilean unionists passed through its programs. Many of them were involved in the strikes that crippled the economy prior to the U.S.-sponsored coup in 1973.

AIFLD also helped to destabilize Cheddi Jagan's government in Guyana in 1963 with a massive infusion of money and riots organized by its graduates. In the Dominican Republic, AIFLD tried to drum up labor support for the 1965 Johnson administration invasion that toppled Juan Bosch's independent government.

From 1983 to 1989, another AFL-CIO arm funneled more than \$6 million to a Philippines trade union, a creation of Ferdinand Marcos' dictatorship that had allied itself with death squads in fighting a more radical union.

Organized labor was also an enthusiastic supporter of the Vietnam War, often down to the rank and file. One of the enduring images of the conflict at home was the scene in May 1970 of hundreds of hard-hatted construction workers in the Wall Street area attacking protesters against Nixon's invasion of Cambodia.

By the end of the Cold War, the AFL-CIO was spending more money abroad "organizing" unions that served U.S. interests than it spent organizing workers at home.

There were hopes, however, after the authoritarian Lane Kirkland was finally deposed as head of the AFL-CIO in 1995 that the federation's policies would change.

Writing in *Labor Notes*, journalist David Bacon stated that in 2000 "the AFL-CIO called for ending military

assistance to Colombia." Labor's strong reaction to the Colombian murders stands in contrast to its relative silence during the Reagan administration-sponsored wars in Central America in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

"During that era ... Kirkland tried to suppress criticism of U.S. foreign policy in union ranks and to stop local efforts to organize support for Salvadoran unionists," Bacon continued.

And prior to Sept. 11, the AFL-CIO was tentatively adding its muscle to the mushrooming movement against corporate globalization.

But since the Bush administration launched the "war on terrorism," it has again retreated to the sidelines and was a no-show at recent protests against the World Bank and IMF in Washington, D.C.

Moreover, it has never really stopped its Third World meddling. AIFLD has been replaced by the American Center for International Labor Solidarity, which is listed as one of the four "core institutes" of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

Historian Allen Weinstein, who headed the study that led to the creation of the NED, was candid about its purpose. "A lot of what we do today was done covertly 25 years ago by the CIA" he said.

This past Feb. 12, the AFL-CIO sponsored a closed forum with NED featuring members of the Confederation of Venezuelan Workers (CTV), which was involved in the brief coup two months later against President Hugo Chavez.

In the May 2002 issue of *Labor Notes*, Katherine Hoyt reported, "According to one union member who participated in the forum, the CTV representatives noted that they were here to discuss the chances for a coup in Venezuela."

After the coup collapsed, *The New York Times* reported April 25 that NED gave \$154,377 to the Solidarity Center to assist the CTV "in advancing labor rights." Perhaps it is a small step that the AFL-CIO has not endorsed Bush's war plans against Iraq. But it's clearly still not above dirty tricks.





ASSOCIATED PRESS

## A GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT: WAR ON IRAQ MAY SINK U.S. ECONOMY

BY IMC STAFF

Like a punch-drunk prizefighter, the U.S. economy is reeling. It has been dealt some grievous body blows over the past two years: rising unemployment, a collapsing stock market, increasing corporate bankruptcies, accounting scandals, declining business investment.

The worst may be yet to come: a haymaker in the form of an invasion of Iraq. The human toll of any war is expected to be high, especially to Iraqis. To Americans, who had grown cozy with the idea of bloodless wars, at least until Sept. 11, the economic impact may be most profound.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has offered the most detailed calculation of the cost of a war with Iraq. It estimates:

- Deploying forces to the Persian Gulf would cost between \$9 billion and \$13 billion.
- Fighting the war would cost \$9 billion for the first month, and \$8 billion for each succeeding month.
- The "costs to return U.S. forces to their home bases would range between \$5 billion and \$7 billion."
- An occupation could cost up to \$4 billion a month.

The CBO concurred with White House advisor Larry Lindsey that costs could easily be in the \$100 billion to \$200 billion range, about one to two percent of the gross domestic product (GDP).

U.S. allies such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Japan picked up the tab for the 1990-91 Gulf War (some observers even suspect the Pentagon made a profit).

This time, the U.S. alone will bear the costs. Ellen Frank, an associate professor of economics at Emmanuel College in Boston, says, "A war will affect the federal deficit dollar for dollar." She states that the deficit, which already stands at almost \$160 billion, would balloon from the cost of another war.

Frank says businesses would be affected by a widening budget deficit. It would create a "crowding out" of the credit markets, pitting government against businesses as both compete for a limited pool of bond buyers.

The Federal Reserve would likely raise interest rates if the budget gap keeps widening, raising the cost of borrowing and further constraining business activity.

Frank says the Fed is "disingenuous," though, when it blames rising interest rates on the budget deficit. "The question is will [the Fed] interest rates go up if the government is running a deficit to pay for a war?" she asks. "The answer is yes."

Oil prices have already been impacted by the war talk. Despite the worldwide economic malaise, resulting in an oversupply, crude is near \$30 a barrel. Traders say the current "war premium" is about \$4 to \$6 a barrel. Frank says "fear" is driving up oil prices.

Testifying before Congress on Sept. 13, Miriam Pemberton of Foreign Policy in Focus pointed out that "ten months ago, the price was half that." Pemberton contended that a \$10 per barrel increase in oil prices would over a year's time reduce "GDP growth by about a half percent and add nearly one percent to inflation."

The attack on Oct. 6 by Islamic radicals on a French

oil tanker near Yemen unsettled skittish markets, but it is unlikely that supplies would be significantly disrupted by a war.

Even during the "war of the tankers" between Iran and Iraq in the late 1980s, oil prices barely budged. And Saudi Arabia is already exceeding its production quota by an extra million barrels of oil a day to tamp down prices.

Overall, it is fear and uncertainty that may wreak the most economic damage. An invasion probably won't happen until the New Year when U.S. troops will be in place, the environmental conditions optimal and the issue of inspectors dispensed with (or so Bush hopes). This means months more of uncertainty that will keep consumers and businesses on edge, especially through the critical holiday spending season.

Consumer sentiment tanked during the first Gulf War. While Frank doesn't think consumers have been affected by the war talk, they have by the recession. With weakening retail sales, the evidence is mounting that consumers, who had been largely carrying the economy for the last year, may be running out of steam.

"Business investment," she notes, "ground to a halt over a year ago. The question is will it revive, and adding war talk to that mix will not make it more optimistic."

George Bush is optimistic about one thing, namely that he can deliver a knockout blow to Saddam Hussein. But in the process he might also deliver one to the U.S. economy.

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## VOICES FROM IRAQ

"So what is happening is punishing a nation. Collective punishment of a nation. And this collective punishment comes as a result of a blackmailing being practiced and being done by late former President Bush. In 1992 officially President Bush on television told the Iraqi people 'Change your government or the sanctions will continue.' He told that to the Iraqi people and every Iraqi heard that." —Dr. Abdul Razzaq, President of the Peace & Friendship Society of Iraq

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"The lack of clean water is the single biggest killer of children, the sick, and the elderly. The majority of patients in Iraq's hospitals are stricken with amoebic dysentery, gastroenteritis and other waterborne diseases." <http://www.iraqwaterproject.com>

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"...we are facing the tragedy daily because of the high figure of mortality. Just we can't offer our patients for example the advanced antibiotics for the real diseases they are suffering from like meningitis, which is really a disastrous disease. You can't recover without the right antibiotics at the right time for the right period and for the right dosages. You face a handicapped child. And this tragedy is still existing at this moment because of the political stances of the U.S. and British representatives in the 661 committee who cancel many of these medical contracts ..." —Dr. Mkai, Al-Mansour Childrens Hospital, Baghdad

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Within five minutes on February 13, 1991 U.S. bombers threw two bombs - especially designed to penetrate hardened targets - right in the middle of the Al-Amiriya shelter. The first bomb exploded at 4:30am and opened a hole in the shelter's roof. The second bomb was bigger and more powerful. It exploded a few minutes after the first one. The shelter is located in a residential area of Baghdad. It housed 500 triple-decked beds and was reportedly crowded that night. Nearly all of the estimated 1,500 people, mostly women and children, who came for protection against the massive bombing of Baghdad, were killed and only a handful could be saved heavily wounded. Most of the bodies could not be recovered because they were completely burned. Today the shelter is a memorial for those who died there.

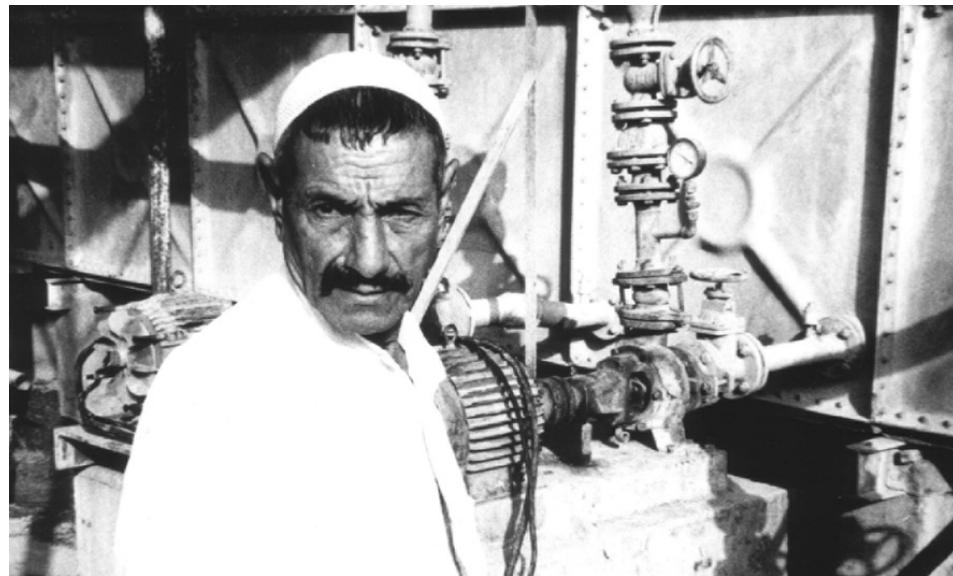
### NOTES FROM THE PHOTOGRAPHER

These pictures were taken during a trip to Iraq in October 2000 with a delegation of Veterans for Peace - Iraq Water Project ([www.iraqwaterproject.com](http://www.iraqwaterproject.com)).

The Iraq Water Project is an effort to end the UN-sanctions against Iraq and stop the frequent violations of Iraqi sovereignty. The project continues to help rebuilding water treatment facilities to provide drinkable water to Iraqi people. In Baghdad and Basrah we had the opportunity to hear reports about the grim economic and health situation in Iraq. Hundreds of thousands of people in Iraq died during these years as a consequence of the combined effects of the destruction of essential infrastructure and the concerted effort of the UN to keep the country in stranglehold of now 12 years of sanctions, blockade and embargo. Additionally, Iraqi cities and villages are still being bombed frequently by the American and British aircraft and missiles. Since December 1998, more than 40,000 violations of the Iraqi airspace were reported with hundreds of bombing raids.

Stop the Bombing - Break the Sanctions - Respect the Sovereignty of Iraq

—Suzanne Kahrs, New York City 2002



Worker at Water Treatment Plant, Hamden Jissir.



Kids getting water, Al-Labbani.



Hospital Staff, Basrah.



At Al-Amiriya Shelter, signs of burned people on the walls.



Al-Amiriya Shelter, pictures of killed children.

# MORE THAN ANOTHER GROUND ZERO

4,000 YEARS OF IRAQI CULTURE PRECEDE BUSH AND HUSSEIN

BY EMILY REINHARDT AND CHRIS ANDERSON

America is planning to wage war, for the second time in little more than a decade, on a country of 24 million people, home to one of the world's most ancient cultures.

Believed to be the location of the biblical Garden of Eden, the Mesopotamian Valley, where present-day Iraq is located, is the birthplace of a number of civilizations (Sumerian, Akkadian, Babylonian and Assyrian).

Innovations in human civilization that sprang up in the Mesopotamian Valley include commercial record keeping (accounting), banking, recording of literature (writing), land cultivation, calendars, code of law (Hammurabi), equal protection under the law, state as law enforcement, division of the circle in 360 degrees, longitude and latitude, algebra (which Christian Europe thought was the work of Satan), the invention of zero, algorithms and calculus.

In addition to everyday items (like the number zero), ancient Mesopotamia produced a number of "wonders of the world."

**The Hanging Gardens of Babylon:** Nebuchadnezzar's wife (or concubine, depending on the legend) was homesick for her home terrain, the mountains. The gardens, completed around 600 B.C.E., were 25 yards off the ground and contained trees actually planted in the clay, not the ground. The Gardens are considered one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

**The Tower of Babel:** Some archaeologists believe the mythical tower actually existed in modern-day Iraq after finding what appears to be its 300-square-foot foundation. The tower was destroyed and rebuilt many times until it was the tallest in Mesopotamia. At its greatest height (roughly 580 B.C.E.), it stood 295 feet high.

Islam came to the Mesopotamian Valley in the seventh century C.E. Fast-forward to the 20th century and the founding of modern Iraq in 1920, as a "British mandate." Arab nationalism arose after World War I, when the League of Nations reneged on its promise of independence for Iraq. Iraq achieved independence in 1932.

**Ethnic Population of Iraq:** 75 percent Arabic. Kurds make up another 15 to 20 percent, while the rest of the population is Turkmen, Jews, Armenians and Assyrians.

**Iraqi Delicacies:** Lis-san el qua-thi (eggplant-wrapped meat), which translates to "Tongue of the Judge"; ba'ba beh tamur, Iraqi pastries stuffed with cheese, almonds or dates; katayef, a combination of filo dough, ricotta cheese and syrup; melfoof (filo, almonds, cardamom and rose water).

**Iraqi Pop Stars:** Ilhaim Al Madfai: is a guitar player, formed one of the first pop bands in Iraq, known as the Twisters. He is known for combining traditional Iraqi music with modern instruments. Haitham Yousif: Haitham Yousif's website advertises him as "The Prince of Love." He is a singer with a large international following of Iraqi expatriates, especially teenage girls.



A STREET SCENE IN BAGHDAD reveals some of the country's resplendent architecture.

SUZANNE KAHRS

## Letter from Baghdad CONTINUED FROM COVER

When will Americans wake up? Our security cannot depend on the insecurity of everyone else.

Donald Rumsfeld angrily denounces Iraq for having an "insatiable appetite" for weapons. This from a man whose budget for war is 10 times the size of Iraq's entire economy. And Colin Powell criticizes the United Nations for forging an agreement to return weapons inspectors — four days after Bush demanded the United Nations do it or become "irrelevant."

Some accuse us of being "fools" or "apologists" for the Iraqi government. Whenever we have the opportunity to speak with government officials we raise concerns about prisons, extrajudicial killings, and state-directed violence. Our status as Americans gives us this luxury, something the Iraqis themselves do not have.

According to Human Rights Watch, Iraq has roughly 3,000 extrajudicial killings per year. According to UNICEF, U.S. policy kills more than 50,000 Iraqi children every year. Both are terrible. But they aren't equivalent.

It strikes me as hypocritical to speak out against a foreign govern-

ment for killing innocents while remaining silent about our tax dollars facilitating the killing of many more by our own government.

If the only way to get anyone to pay attention to ordinary Iraqis is to be in Baghdad when the bombs fall, so be it. We're here.

We are volunteering with NGOs already working in Iraq, and we're doing regular reporting and writing. Some of that writing will be carried in alternative media and small-town papers, and, even after the United States destroys the electricity and phone lines, we will get reports out through the local press center on a satellite phone. We will not let folks back home forget the human consequences of what they do here.

Milan Kundera once wrote, "The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting."

We are here to be part of that struggle.

Mohammed Ghani Hekmat is perhaps the most prominent artist in Iraq, and one of the kindest men I've ever met. His sculptures decorate the country. He's proud to be the first Muslim artist ever commissioned by the Vatican. In 1991, he was working on a

series of life-size reliefs of the Stations of the Cross when the Gulf War happened. The windows in his studio were blown out by the explosions. We asked him what he thought of the American people, and his voice filled with anger: "They're innocent," he said, "Innocent! Like children."

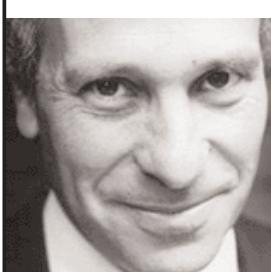
Today, I know where the good Americans are. They're in Iraq, and they're in the streets of America — laying their lives on the line to prevent the mass destruction of human life.

We get what we pay for in this life. I don't want to die. I'm scared for my life. But this storm is fast upon us. This is the moment when we all must ask — what are we willing to risk for peace?

*Ramzi Kysia is a Muslim-American peace activist, working with the Education for Peace in Iraq Center ([www.epic-usa.org](http://www.epic-usa.org)). He is currently in Iraq with the Voices in the Wilderness ([www.vitw.org](http://www.vitw.org)) Iraq Peace Team ([www.iraqpeaceteam.org](http://www.iraqpeaceteam.org)), a project to place American peace workers in Iraq prior to, during, and after any U.S. attack.*

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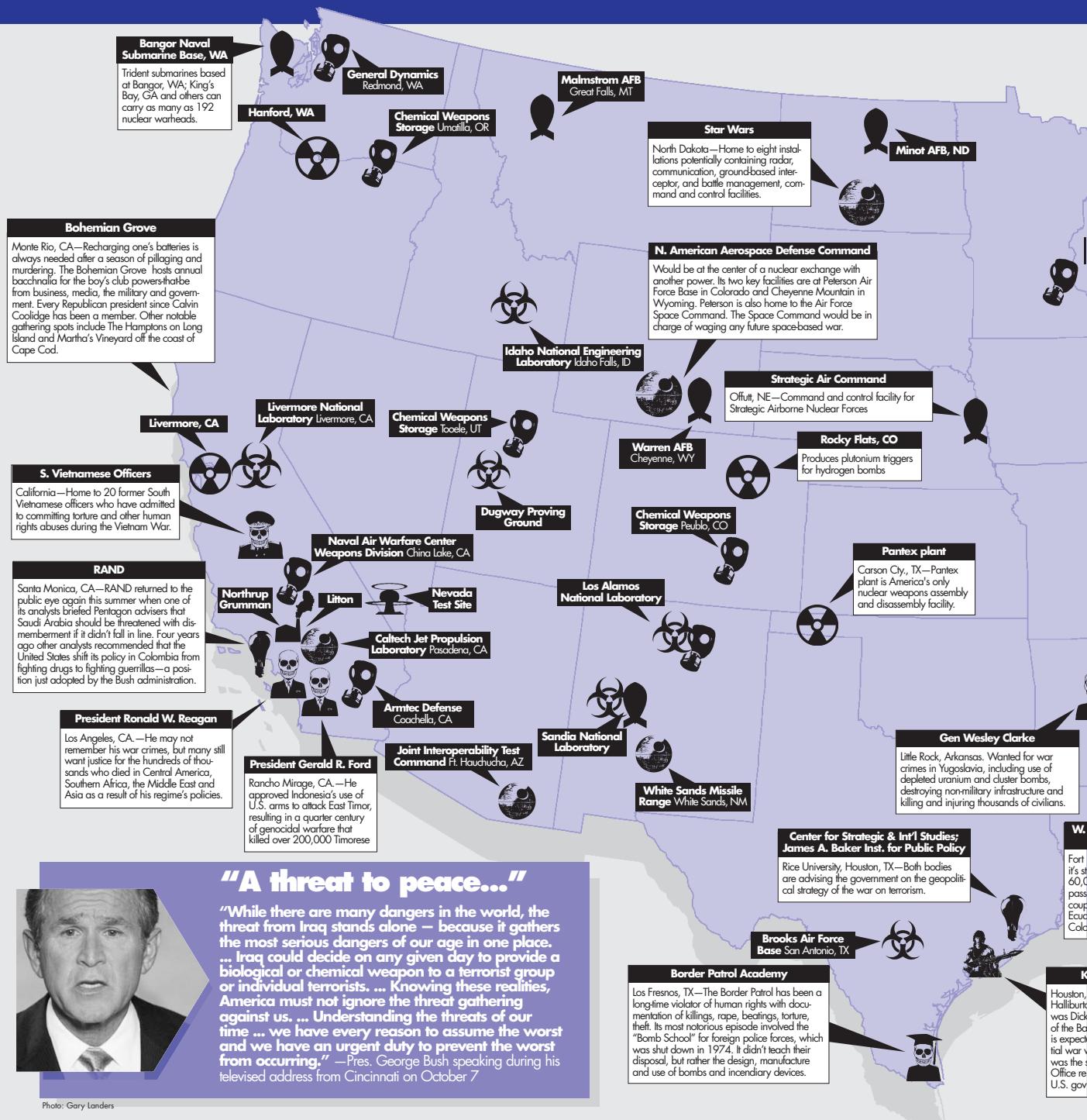


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# A THREAT TO PEACE



## LEGEND

### STAR WARS & MISSILE RESEARCH

It's called Ballistic Missile Defense, but government officials see it as central to U.S. global strategy. BMD would allow the U.S. to have "flexibility" with nuclear-armed rivals like Russia or China. It could threaten a nuclear first strike while guarding against a counterstrike, a goal explicitly stated in this year's Nuclear Posture Review.

### CHEMICAL WEAPONS

There are dozens of sites around the country for the development, manufacturing, testing and storage of chemical weapons. The U.S. has been destroying Cold War-era stockpiles of chemical weapons, but is developing a whole new generation of "non-lethal" or "less-lethal" chemical weapons.

### IMPORTED WAR CRIMINALS

The U.S. is home to many, particularly from fallen dictatorships once the darlings of Washington. Some are even in Federal Witness Protection. Those in hiding include Gen. Mansour Moharram, head of the brutal prison system under the Shah of Iran, and Armando Fernandez Larros, who served in a Chilean military squad that tortured and executed political prisoners.

### DOMESTIC WAR CRIMINALS

While efforts have been made to prosecute war criminals such as Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic and Chilean president Augusto Pinochet, no top American officials have been held accountable for their well-documented participation in genocide and political atrocities.

### PRIVATE MERCENARY COMPANIES

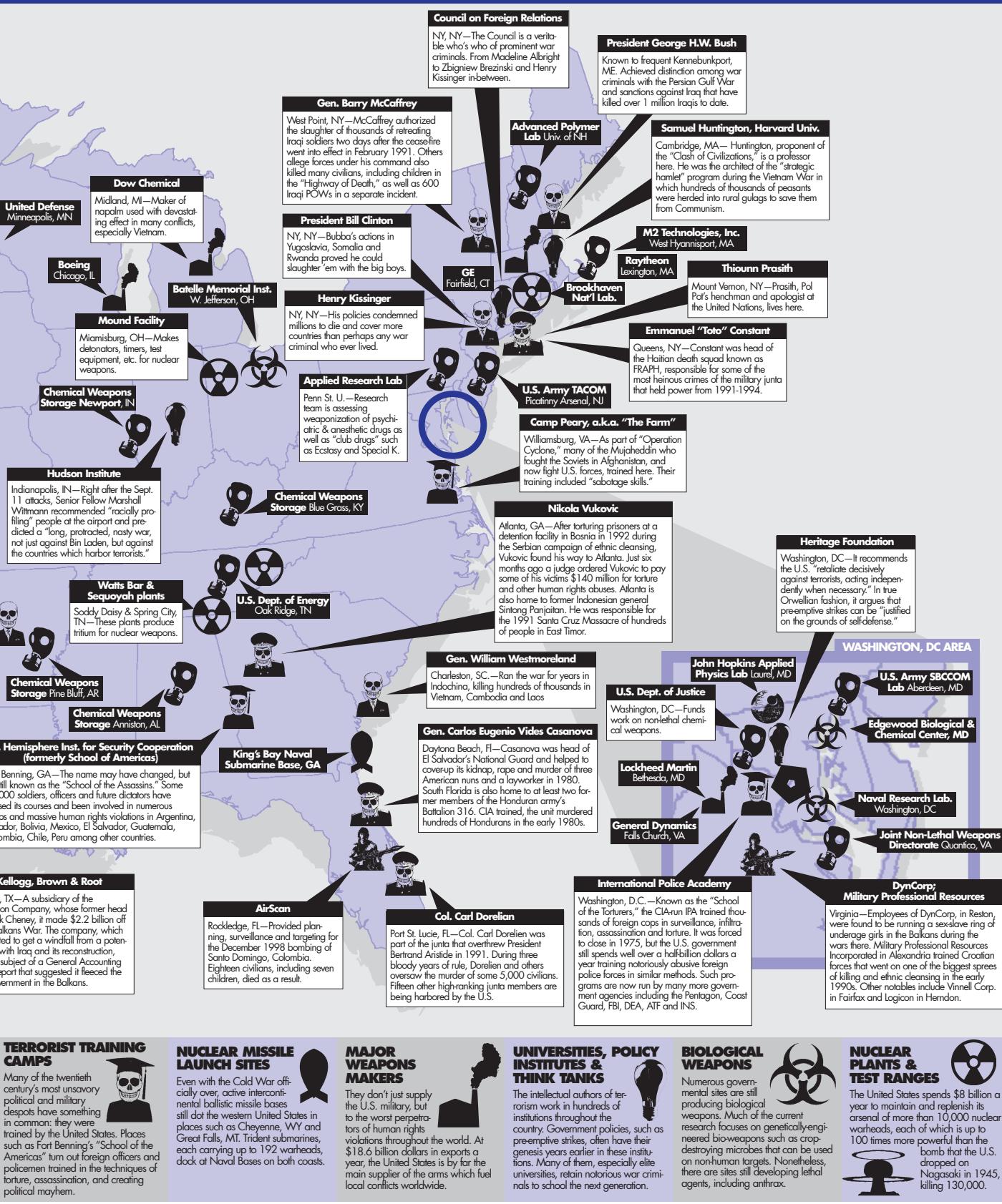
War is a big business. More and more, war making is being carried out by mercenary companies that are unaccountable to the public, allowing the U.S. to engage in conflicts that might otherwise draw scrutiny. Because of their private status, whatever war crimes they commit go unpunished if not unnoticed.

### MILITARY SITES

Of course it's the military-security and political establishments that are ultimately at the front lines of terrorism. The Washington, D.C. area is the nerve center for the planning and organizing of terrorist campaigns that have killed millions. The Pentagon is in Arlington, VA. There's also the CIA in Langley, VA, the NSA in Fort Meade, MD, and the FBI, State Department and White House, in Washington, D.C.

# "Iraq stands alone because it gathers the most serious dangers of our age in one place."

—PRESIDENT BUSH ADDRESSING THE NATION FROM CINCINNATI ON OCTOBER 7



# PROSPECTING FOR BLACK GOLD

BY IMC STAFF

U.S. policy towards the Middle East is based on the age-old human lust for gold. In this case, black gold. Just five countries in the Middle East sit atop nearly two-thirds of the proven oil reserves in the world. And of these five, only Iran and Iraq remain outside of the U.S. sphere of influence, possibly the real reason why President Bush designated them, along with North Korea, as the "axis of evil."

The United States is increasingly dependent on foreign oil, having imported 56 percent of its supplies in 2000 (though most of that comes from its hemispheric neighbors, chiefly Canada, Mexico and Venezuela).

The petro-cabinet assembled by Bush has hopscotched the world — from Central Asia and equatorial Africa to the Andean region and Alaska — to secure more sources to feed the West's addiction. Yet, oil discoveries peaked in the 1960s. Today, newly discovered reserves amount to only one-quarter of annual global consumption.

Since the first oil well began pumping in Titusville, Pa., on Aug. 27, 1859, some 900 billion barrels of oil have been sucked out of the earth. More than one trillion barrels in proven reserves exist around the world. Forecasting future discoveries is tricky at best, but perhaps another half-trillion barrels of oil remain hidden in undiscovered conventional reserves.

It is estimated that world production will peak between 2010 and 2020. Disciples of M. King Hubbert, who accurately predicted in 1956 that oil production would peak in the lower 48 states around 1970, contend that prices will rise sharply after 2010 as production peaks and reaches a point of diminishing returns.

Others dispute this, noting that contrary to expectations, two new "super-giant" fields have been discovered in Kazakhstan and Iran in the last decade. And as prices rise, it makes deep-ocean, marginal fields and Arctic exploration more economical. Ironically, as fossil-fuel-induced climate change warms the globe, oil companies are anticipating an oil rush in the largely unexplored and environmentally fragile polar regions.

Unconventional sources — tar sands in Western Canada, the heavy oil belt in Venezuela, and oil shale in the United States, Brazil, Zaire, India and many other countries — may become major producers of oil by the mid-21st century. According to a 1993 survey by the U.S. Geological Service, worldwide recoverable reserves of conventional oil amount to 2.1 to 2.8 trillion barrels. In the case of unconventional sources, it is thought that another three trillion barrels can be extracted. Yet it will still take decades, if not longer, to develop the technology to efficiently extract petroleum from tar sands or oil shale.

The estimation of reserves is fraught with politics and guesswork. The two annual industry benchmarks are compiled by *World Oil* and *Oil and Gas Journal* largely from data provided by individual countries. Both outfits have placed "proven" global reserves at about 1 trillion barrels for most of the last decade. In contrast, in 1995 PetroConsultants estimated "assessed" reserves at 746 billion barrels.

It's suspected that many OPEC countries pump up their estimates because their production quotas are based on

## POWER MEANS PUMPING THE NUMBERS

the size of the reserves. Indeed, in 1988 and 1990, many Middle Eastern countries revised their reserves dramatically upward despite no new major discoveries. From 1986 to 1990, according to data from *World Oil* and *Oil and Gas Journal*, global reserves increased a staggering 39 percent from 708 billion barrels to 983 billion barrels.

Source: *Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi*, [www.eni.it/english](http://www.eni.it/english)

### TOP 10 COUNTRIES

#### RESERVES (millions of barrels as of Jan. 1, 2002):

Saudi Arabia: 261,750  
Iraq: 112,500  
United Arab Emirates: 97,800  
Kuwait: 96,500  
Iran: 89,700  
Venezuela: 77,685  
Russia: 48,573  
Libya: 29,500  
Mexico: 26,941  
Nigeria: 24,000  
Total: 864,949  
Rest of the World: 167,182  
World Total: 1,032,131

#### PRODUCTION (millions of barrels per day):

Saudi Arabia: 8.528  
United States: 8.091  
Russia: 7.014  
Iran: 3.775  
Mexico: 3.560  
Norway: 3.408  
China: 3.297  
Venezuela: 3.137  
Canada: 2.749  
United Arab Emirates: 2.550  
Total: 46.159  
Rest of the World: 29.067  
World Total: 75.226  
World Annual Total: 28,180

#### CONSUMPTION (millions of barrels per day):

United States: 19.993  
Japan: 5.423  
China: 4.854  
Germany: 2.814  
Russia: 2.531  
South Korea: 2.126  
Brazil: 2.123  
Canada: 2.048  
France: 2.040  
India: 2.011  
Top 10 Countries: 45.964  
Rest of the World: 30.024  
World Total: 75.988  
World Annual Total: 28,460

Other analysts note that Third World regions are at the beginning of the discovery curve, likely resulting in increasing output in future decades.

This hasn't escaped the notice of the Bush administration. After being heckled for defending America's gluttonous lifestyle at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in September, Colin Powell embarked on his real business: currying favor with oil-rich African nations like Gabon and Angola. Sub-Saharan Africa already provides the U.S. with 15 percent of its daily supply, which is expected to rise to 25 percent by 2015.

Walter Kansteiner, assistant secretary of state for Africa, is blunt about U.S. policy toward the forgotten continent. "African oil is of national strategic interest to us, and it will increase and become more important as we go forward ... that's really the primary focus of what our policy is."

One of America's newest friends is the tiny island nation of Sao Tome and Principe. Located off the West coast of Africa near the equator, it sits on some 4 billion barrels of oil. One reporter profiling the country asked, "Who needs Saudi Arabia when you've got Sao Tome?" Well, we do. Four billion barrels is about what the United States imports in one year and is a mere puddle compared to the oceanic reserves in the Middle East.

The newly created African Oil Policy Initiative Group (AOPIG) is recommending oil-driven foreign policy objectives for Africa to the Bush administration. One objective is reported to be the construction of a U.S. naval base within the Sao Tome and Principe region. The base would provide a harbor for aircraft

carriers, patrol boats and Marines.

The biggest undiscovered reserves are thought to exist in Iraq, which has been shut off from exploration since 1990. U.S., British, French and Russian oil companies are jockeying to be first in line when the prospecting begins. The looming invasion of Iraq is part of the White House's plans to ensure cheap oil for consumers, as outlined in its national energy strategy last year.

That is also why the White House has displayed extreme prejudice toward alternative and renewable fuels. Cheap,

relatively clean, abundant wind and tidal power are already within reach. But to the oil industry (and the Bush administration), they're a danger to the status quo. The only alternative energy the administration has shown enthusiasm for — hydrogen fuel cells — is also one that is decades away from being feasible and which would still probably rely on fossil fuels for generating the hydrogen.

From today's vantage point, it appears that oil dependence — and bitter, destructive oil wars — will dominate the landscape of the 21st century.

December 1 marks the 50th year of operations for one of the world's largest and most notorious animal testing facilities - Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS). Since 1999 Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty has waged an intense and extremely successful campaign to close HLS. Join SHAC USA & Last Chance for Animals (LCA) for 3 days of action opposing the death of 500 animals a day inside of HLS.

**NOV. 30TH 6-10PM, CLARION HOTEL**  
2055 Lincoln Highway, Edison, NJ 08817  
Hear a former political prisoner, an HLS campaigner, a very special surprise guest, and others speak on their experience and undying motivation to fight against injustice.

**DEC. 1ST 11 AM, COLONIAL PARK**  
Metters Rd., East Millstone, NJ  
Join activists at the lab where 9 million dogs, cats, primates, rabbits and others have died since 1952. Hear from speakers and protest at HLS.

**DEC 2ND 11 AM, NYC**  
Meet at 85th and Central Park West (inside Central Park), New York, New York 10024  
The Big Action in the Big Apple

SHAC-USA  
1-888-354-2435  
[www.SHACUSA.net](http://www.SHACUSA.net)

To keep current on the event, visit [www.December1.net](http://www.December1.net)

# THUGS-IN-WAITING

## U.S. PROPS UP INEPT IRAQI OPPOSITION

By IMC STAFF

If the United States topples Saddam Hussein, who might replace him? The White House is reported to favor the installation of a U.S. military government modeled on Gen. Douglas MacArthur's six-year rule over Japan following its defeat in World War II.

The United States needed legitimacy, however, and found it in Emperor Hirohito, who was allowed to stay on the Chrysanthemum Throne despite his complicity in war crimes.

The United States may also turn to royalty in the case of Iraq. Pentagon mega-hawk Paul Wolfowitz is eagerly promoting the restoration of the Hashemite dynasty. It ruled Iraq for some 37 hapless — and bloody — years before military forces overthrew the monarchy in 1958 and beheaded 24-year-old King Faisal II.

Power would eventually be turned over to an Iraqi. Perhaps the United States will elevate a Westernized oil man, as in Afghanistan. Both President Hamid Karzai and U.S. special envoy Zalmay Khalilzad (who some say is really running the show) served as consultants to Unocal, a California-based oil giant with interests in Afghanistan.

In all likelihood, the United States will pluck some two-bit thug from the ranks of the exiled Iraqi opposition and present him as the democratic savior of Iraq.

David Pratt, writing in Scotland's *Sunday Herald*, recently offered a look at three of the unsavory characters who would be king:

### Gen. Nizar al-Khazraji

According to many human rights groups, Gen. Nizar al-

Khazraji was the field commander who led the 48-hour chemical weapons attack that poisoned and burned 5,000 Kurdish civilians in the northern town of Halabja in March 1988. He also ... kicked a Kurdish child to death after his forces entered a village during the Iraqi repression.

But, says Ambassador David Mack, a senior official in the U.S. State Department who coordinates meetings of Iraqi opposition groups in Washington, D.C., Gen. Khazraji has "a good military reputation" and "the right ingredients" as a future leader in Iraq.

The most senior military officer to defect since 1990, al-Khazraji was Hussein's chief of staff from 1980 until 1991.... He left Iraq in 1996 and ... now lives in a quiet suburb of Copenhagen ... He has not been quiet about his plans to lead Iraq: he once described his future leadership as a "sacred duty."

### Brig. Gen. Najib al-Salihi

In meetings at the British Foreign Office in March this year, Brig. Gen. Najib al-Salihi acquired the sobriquet of "the rapidly rising star" of the Iraqi opposition....

Commander of an armored division of Iraq's elite Republican Guard in the Gulf War, Salihi played a significant role in Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. He was also engaged in putting down the uprising against Saddam's rule that followed the defeat by U.S.-led forces....

After commanding Iraqi forces in putting down another rebellion by an opposition group in 1995, Salihi defected to his former enemies and came to cooperate with the United States, where he now lives... He heads the CIA-sponsored Iraqi Free Officers Movement, another collec-

tion of dubious military exiles in the Washington suburbs, which he claims can raise 30,000 fighters....

Cleverly, Salihi avoids giving the impression of being power-hungry and speaks of the "tough work ahead" and the "bond of trust with the Iraqi people." The same Iraqi people he so mercilessly crushed when they opposed Saddam.

### Ahmad al-Chalabi

The long-time face of the Iraqi opposition in Washington, Ahmad al-Chalabi took the reins of the Iraqi National Congress (INC), an umbrella organization created in 1992 with the assistance of the CIA. Although he was officially demoted in 1999 to be a member of the INC's executive council rather than its leader, he is widely accepted as the first among equals and is spoken of by INC officials as the future president of Iraq. This despite the fact that the U.S. State Department recently found that about half of the \$4 million it had given to the INC was not properly accounted for. They clearly expected better from a former maths professor and banker, and cut off funding. Chalabi, however, galvanized his U.S. supporters, and the Pentagon and the White House again started picking up the tab.

Chalabi is, if nothing else, an operator. One delegate at a New York meeting of the INC said of him: "He takes more than his share, much more than his share, and I get nothing. Just look at the way he dresses. They say Saddam has 300 suits; well, this guy has 400."

For the full article go to: [www.sundayherald.com/27877](http://www.sundayherald.com/27877)

# GULF WAR BETRAYAL: BUSH SR. SUSTAINED HUSSEIN IN HIS HOUR OF NEED

The following is excerpted from *The New Rulers of the World* (Verso Books, 2002) by John Pilger.

During the Gulf War, President George Bush Senior called on "the Iraqi military and the Iraqi people to take matters into their own hands and force Saddam Hussein to step aside." In March 1991, the majority of Shi'a people in the South rallied to Bush's call and rose up. So successful were they, at first, that within two days Saddam Hussein's rule had collapsed across southern Iraq and the popular uprising had spread to the country's second city, Basra. A new start for the Iraqi people seemed close at hand. Then the tyrant's old paramour in Washington intervened just in time.

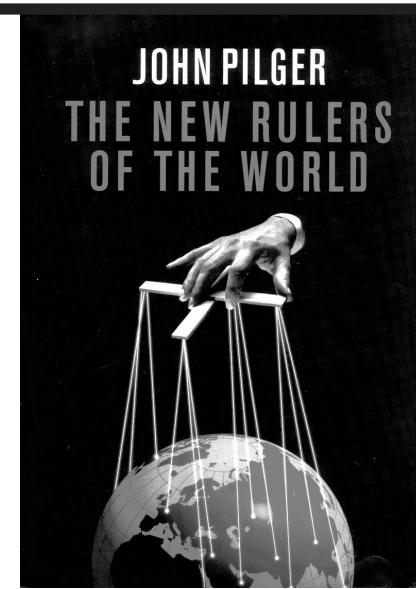
"The opposition," Said Aburish told me, "found themselves confronted with the United States helping Saddam Hussein against them. The Americans actually stopped rebels from reaching arms depots. They denied them shelter. They gave Saddam Hussein's Republican Guard safe passage through American lines in order to attack the rebels. They did everything except join the fight on his side." In their book, *Out of the Ashes: the Resurrection of Saddam Hussein*, Andrew and Patrick Cockburn describe the anguish of one of the rebel leaders, a brigadier, who watched American helicopters circling overhead as Iraqi government helicopter crews poured kerosene on columns of fleeing refugees and set them alight with tracer fire. "I saw with my own eyes the American planes flying over the helicopters," he said. "We were expecting them to help; now we could see them witnessing our demise.... They were taking pictures and they knew exactly what was happening."

In Nasiriyah, American troops prevented the rebels from taking guns and ammunition from the army barracks. "The Iraqis explained to the American commander who they were and why they were there," wrote the Cockburns. "It was not a warm reception.... The U.S. officer went away for ten minutes and then returned with the curious claim that he was out of touch with his headquarters. [He] curtly suggested that they try and find the French forces, eighty miles to the West."

The rebels eventually found a French colonel, who wanted to help; but when he tried to set up a meeting with General Schwarzkopf, the American commander, he was told this was not possible. The revolt was doomed; crucial time had been lost. The first city to fall to Saddam Hussein was Basra. Tanks captured the main road and demolished the centers of resistance. "It was a bad time," said a doctor at the hospital. "You could see dogs eating bodies in the streets."

In the North, the Kurds, too, had risen up: the revolt John Major said he had "never asked for." Saddam Hussein's Republican Guards, who had been pointedly spared by Schwarzkopf, entered the Kurdish town of Sulaimaniya and extinguished the Kurdish resistance. Saddam Hussein had survived by a whisker; as his troops were celebrating their victory, their ammunition ran out. Five years later, when Saddam Hussein sent his tanks into another rebellious Kurdish town, Arbil, American aircraft circled the city for twenty minutes, then flew away. The CIA contingent among the CIA-funded Iraqi National Congress were rounded up and executed....

Why? What the Americans fear is that the Kurds might establish their own state, perhaps even socialist and democratic, and that the Shi'a might forge an "Islamic Alliance" with



Iran.... The American television journalist Peter Jennings put it this way: "The United States did not want Saddam Hussein to go, they just didn't want the Iraqi people to take over." Brent Scowcroft, President Bush Senior's National Security Advisor, concurred. In 1997, he said: "We clearly would have preferred a coup. There's no question about that." *The New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman, a guard dog of U.S. foreign policy, was more to the point. "What Washington wants is an iron-fisted Iraqi junta," which would be "the best of both worlds." The clear conclusion is that they want another Saddam Hussein, rather like the one they had before in 1991, who did what he was told.

NOVEMBER 2002

THE INDEPENDENT PAGE 13

# FEAR AND LOATHING IN THE MIDEAST

By AK GUPTA

The war on terrorism is looking more like a war on Islam. Except it's less a clash of civilizations than a clash of barbarisms.

It started with a regime change in Afghanistan a year ago. Then a demand that the Palestinians change their leaders to ones of our (and Israel's) liking. Now, it's Iraq turn.

The Bush administration's *caucus belli* is that Iraq is hoarding weapons of mass destruction. No evidence has been offered, but not to worry, we're told: The coming invasion will not only remove the Butcher of Baghdad, but it will turn out to be a weapon of mass democracy.

Once Iraq is transformed into a Connecticut-style suburb, democracy will flower in the desert. Saudi Arabia will have no option but to reform its medieval autocracy. Iran's Islamic revolution will wither away. Syria will be forced to sever its ties with the Israel-hating Hezbollah in Lebanon. And the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will be solved once and for all.

When asked about the effect of an invasion on the Arab street, one administration official responded, "What Arab street?" Looking at recent developments, maybe they shouldn't be sanguine. The attack on an oil tanker near Yemen, the killing of a U.S. Marine in Kuwait, the bomb blast in Indonesia, the surprising show of strength by Islamic parties in Pakistan's election reveal a polarization of opinion in the Muslim world.

Most ominous, Afghanistan is slowly destabilizing and anti-U.S. warlords have already launched a new jihad to rid the country of foreign forces.

The U.S. sees al Qaeda lurking in every shadow and behind every stone. The attacks appear to be the work of local militants whose ties to the extremist group appear to be mostly out of ideology and sympathy. Ironically, by claiming al Qaeda is behind every attack, the U.S. only strengthens its appeal and following.

The following is a look at some of the countries at the center of the war.

## Afghanistan

This is where it all began and has yet to end. Almost a year after the Taliban were toppled, the country is still in disarray.

President Hamid Karzai's regime is limited to Kabul with warlords controlling the countryside. A vice president and minister have been assassinated. No one is stepping up to provide troops for the international security force, least of all the Pentagon. The 9,000 U.S. troops in the country have their hands full with almost daily attacks against them and their bases.

Afghanistan has no army to speak of. Its coffers are bare. Reconstruction is on hold. Karzai's security detail was so thoroughly infiltrated by his opponents that the U.S. now protects him — bolstering those who say he's an American puppet.

The assassination attempt (by a recent Afghan army graduate) on Karzai on Sept. 5 and a deadly car bombing the same day in Kabul, were believed to be the calling card of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. He's now organizing a "freedom struggle against foreign troops."

His crusade is capitalizing on perceived injustices by the Americans against the numerically dominant Pashtuns, who were at the core of the Taliban and have been largely excluded from the new regime. Copies of a taped speech of his are circulating through the countryside in which he asks why Pashtuns are the only victims of U.S. bombings. Hekmatyar, who is not the only warlord stirring up trouble for the U.S., also plays on the humiliation felt by many at the hands of overbearing U.S. forces raiding homes and searching women.

## Iran

Tehran's leaders would be pleased to see Hussein removed from power in neighboring Iraq. He killed hundreds of thousands of Iranians in the war he initiated

against them (with plenty of U.S. support) in the 1980s. He represses Iran's brethren Shi'as in southern Iraq and hosts tens of thousands over-armed members of the People's Mujaheddin, which wants to topple Iran's rulers.

But if the Pentagon occupies Iraq, Iran would be surrounded by the U.S. As a charter member of the "axis of evil," Iran's Islamic revolutionaries may be the next to go.

The mullahs also have simmering domestic discontent to worry about. A lack of economic opportunity and a youthful population chafing for basic freedoms means the religious regime has thin support. It relies on a heavy stick to stay in power, closing newspapers, jailing opposition politicians and resorting to violence to enforce stifling social codes.

There have been suggestions that Iran's population, which is strongly supportive of reformists, would welcome a U.S.-led regime change in their own country.

The government has few options. One official has observed that it can't fight U.S. missiles while armed only with AK-47s. Iran's foreign policy also often works at crosscurrents as its complex ruling system is fragmented among an elected parliament and president, the religious Guardian Council that vets their decisions and an Expediency Council that mediates between the two.

Recent events indicate that while Tehran is loudly warning against a U.S. invasion, it will stand aside. Hussein sent an envoy to Iran last month to make common cause, but came up empty.

## Israel

No regime is more delighted at the thought of another Persian Gulf war than Ariel Sharon's. It recently received Bush's blessing for retaliation against any Iraqi strike. And with Hussein out of the way, a significant source of funds for the Palestinian intifada would evaporate.

The Palestinians have been virtually abandoned. Israeli forces are shelling and blasting Gaza's refugee camps on a daily basis with no outcry from the West, other than a few White House requests to halt the attacks until an invasion of Iraq begins.

Some Israeli academics have warned that the government may use the war as a pretext for the mass deportation of Palestinians from the West Bank — a position supported by the majority of Israeli Jews. Sharon has long maintained that Jordan is the Palestinian homeland.

## Jordan

Crippled by a withdrawal of U.S. aid after it sat on the sidelines during the first Gulf War, Jordan is throwing its lot in with the U.S. Thousands of U.S. Marines and Special Forces have been training in eastern Jordan along the Iraqi border.

Jordan might also be used as a staging point for a thrust into Iraq, despite strenuous objections from Amman that it won't allow any such operation.

In return, Jordan is asking that the U.S. find it an alternative supply of cheap oil that Iraq now provides at a monthly discount of \$50 million. Jordan has also asked the U.S. for a public declaration that Israel won't push hundreds of thousands of Palestinians across the Jordan River.

## Pakistan

Strongman General Pervez Musharraf ensured Islamic parties would go from two to 51 seats in the nation's parliament by sidelining the two main opposition parties in October's elections. He has also angered Pakistanis of all walks of life by his naked grab for power, meaning his "king's party" will be unable to form a government on its own.

Musharraf can still make constitutional changes at



**A U.S. WAR ON IRAQ** will have repercussions in already volatile surrounding countries.

will, dissolve parliament and ignore any laws it passes. But as the second largest party in the parliament, and with an outright victory in the legislature of the northwest frontier province bordering on Afghanistan, the Islamists have struck a chord with Pakistanis fed up with a faltering economy and overt government support for the U.S. war on terror. Fully 70 percent of the detainees in Guantanamo have been seized in Pakistan.

Musharraf for his part seems oblivious to it all. By one account, at a dinner he gave for Pakistan's business elite he was repeatedly pressed about the increasing chaos and violence in the country. His response was to wave a silver pistol about, announcing, "This is how I protect myself."

## Saudi Arabia

One adviser to the Pentagon has suggested that the Saudi needs to be taken out of Saudi Arabia, meaning the ruling House of Saud. A former member of British Prime Minister Tony Blair's cabinet states the real U.S. war aim is to "control the Saudi oil fields."

Saudis have been pulling their money out of U.S. banks, fearing it may be seized down the road. Anti-U.S. sentiment is rising. Ironically, the high oil prices stemming from Mideast tensions have been a boon for Saudi Arabia. It has few other sources of foreign currency and must support a large welfare state (and 5,000 spoiled princes).

But if Iraq's vast reserves are opened up, sending oil prices plummeting, it could spell disaster for Saudi Arabia's economy and fuel violent opposition. Washington is trying to reduce its dependence on Saudi oil, but the kingdom controls almost a quarter of the world's reserves, making it indispensable to the global economy.

So any U.S. victory in Iraq may be short-lived as the rest of the region becomes engulfed in turmoil.

## GLOBALIZATION GOT YOU DOWN? WTO FILL YOU WITH WOE?



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# TICK, TICK, TICK...

## EGYPTIAN GOV'T KEEPS TIGHT LID ON ANTI-U.S. SENTIMENT

BY PAUL SCHEMM

CAIRO, EGYPT — The police had set up barricades across the street leading to the U.S. Embassy and were turning away passersby. A grim-faced police brigadier curtly informed everyone that he had strict orders not to let anyone through.

"It's a new system," he said, a system which apparently includes not being allowed to take photos of the dozens of women demonstrators trying to push their way through the cordon.

With the start of the school year and war drums beating in Washington, Egypt's political activists are attempting to recapture the momentum of last April when the country was swept by a wave of protests and demonstrations not seen since the Gulf War more than 10 years before. Thousands rallied on university campuses and an invigorated umbrella movement of intellectuals from all political tendencies — socialist, Islamist and Nasserist — attempted to guide the movement.

The state responded cautiously at the time, allowing the demonstrations while being careful to seal them off from the rest of Cairo society and prevent them from spreading. Journalists were allowed free access, partly so that the rest of the world would know that the Arab street isn't happy, said many observers.

The end of the school year, increased repression, and the beginning of summer ended the April "days of rage" as activists took to calling it, but the sense was that the connections had been made so that activism would spring forth anew when the time was right.

Organizers planned to use the second anniversary of the Palestinian intifada on Sept. 28 to kick off the new activist season. The conditions seemed ripe. The oppression and killing of Palestinians was intensifying, Arafat was under siege again and the U.S. administration appeared ever more ready to invade Iraq. In addition, many Egyptians felt very uneasy about apparent U.S. plans to reorder the region.

The result was modest. Only around 1,000 people, accompanied by a like number of riot police, showed up in downtown Cairo for the rally. Organizers alleged that many participants were prevented from attending and that police only let a few through the cordons to join the rally in the highly visible but easily controlled downtown area.

"Activists were telephoned by security ahead of time and told not to come," said Ashraf Al Bayoumi, a leading figure in the Egyptian Popular Committee for Support of the Palestinian Intifada.

"In the beginning, the idea was for the demonstration to be held at Cairo University," said a socialist activist who prefers to remain anonymous. "But the mood among the students is not yet as militant as in April."

"The April demonstrations took them by surprise," said Hisham Kassem, the president of the Egyptian Organization of Human Rights and a long-time observer of the political scene. "Now security knows how to deal with this." He doubted that the demonstrations would be allowed to get any bigger than the small ones held so far.

That could all change, however, if the United States attacks Iraq.

"Egyptians feel that the United States wants to strike against many Islamic countries," said Yasser Khalil, an Egyptian journalist who took part in the September rally.

Another activist, Omar Kamel, emphasized that while no one particularly liked Saddam Hussein, "everyone's against strikes on Iraq." He pointed out that Israel was actually violating many more U.N. resolutions than Iraq and that the United States was turning a blind eye.

"Look, no one has any illusions about Saddam, even those people who chant for Baghdad — he is not the Arab Bismarck," said the socialist activist. "But for us, Bush is the greater evil."

At least publicly, the Egyptian government shares



**DOUBLE THREAT:** Will war in Iraq lead an unsettled Arab street to challenge U.S.-supported regimes like Egypt's?

opposition to the war on Iraq. President Hosni Mubarak has warned against attacking Iraq. His autocratic 21-year rule has been propped up by nearly \$1 billion a year in U.S. aid, however, making it highly unlikely that Mubarak would actually do anything to oppose Washington.

Public rallies remain something with which the regime is profoundly uncomfortable.

In the April demonstrations and again in September, the slogans about Palestine soon segued into ones about the regime. Many called on it to take a more active role (supply the Palestinians with arms, break off diplomatic ties with Israel); others proclaimed more general criticism. "One, two, where is the Arab army?" was a common slogan, but what could also be heard was a chant directed at the president's son, "Hey Gamal, tell your father that millions of us hate him."

At the end of the Sept. 28 demonstration, one leader told the crowd to expect many more demonstrations. Since then there have been more such events, but security has quickly suppressed them unless they are held inside protected places like mosques and universities. That may change if the bombs start falling on Baghdad and the regime may feel it has to allow people on the streets.

"If you manage to get 100,000 people in the streets of Cairo, this means the end of the regime," said the socialist activist, repeating an oft-cited maxim that some say is optimistic. Tens of thousands demonstrated against the Gulf War in 1991 and if the ground war hadn't ended so quickly, it is believed that many more would have joined.

On the other hand, average Egyptians, while perhaps critical of U.S. policy, haven't shown much inclination to clash with security. It remains to be seen just how deep their feelings run towards their Arab brothers.

### SOLICITING SUBMISSIONS FOR PHOTO ESSAY

The New York City Independent Media Center (IMC) is adding a new feature to its monthly paper, *The Indypendent*: a one or two page photo essay.

Photo essays should consist of 10-15 prints exploring one global or local topic. Text and captions to contextualize the essay should be included. Submissions will be accepted in low-resolution jpeg files (no more than 70 KB each file) at [indypendentphotoessay@yahoo.com](mailto:indypendentphotoessay@yahoo.com) or working prints can be mailed to: Photo Essay

NYC Independent Media Center  
34 E. 29th Street, 2nd Floor,  
N.Y., N.Y. 10016.

Attention: do not send original work and if you want your submission returned please include a self-addressed pre-stamped envelope. Include your name and contact information on the back of each photo. Submissions will be accepted throughout the year. If you have any questions, please contact us at [indypendentphotoessay@yahoo.com](mailto:indypendentphotoessay@yahoo.com).

For more information about New York IMC, visit [www.nyc.indymedia.org](http://www.nyc.indymedia.org).

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### NYU TOTAL REQUEST: YO, NO WAR!

On Oct. 10, eight New York University students crashed the stage of MTV's *Total Request Live* to protest the war on Iraq. The students, posing as MTV fans, disrupted the show in two separate groups, removing their sweatshirts to reveal t-shirts stenciled with the words "No War in Iraq." They shouted, "We have an urgent announcement. We have to tell Congress to stop the war. We're standing with people around the world against the war," before being whisked away by MTV security.

The second group did not make it on air but student Agatha Koprowski was heard saying "Not in our name will you kill more people in an unjust war."

Reportedly, Limp Bizkit's Fred Durst scoffed at the students as they were removed from the set. Luis Manriquez, who was in the first group of students to get on screen, said, "We used creative spectacle and forced coverage of a message which is deliberately ignored by mainstream media and corporate television."

### LOCAL GOVERNMENTS GO IT ALONE

While President Bush and Congress have given their stamp of approval on a war in Iraq, local politicians are providing an "official" voice of dissent. In early October, Ithaca's Common Council (city council) voted unanimously on an anti-war statement urging Senators Hillary Clinton and Charles Schumer to vote against the war legislation in Congress (to no avail). According to the Ithaca IMC website ([www.ithaca.indymedia.org](http://www.ithaca.indymedia.org)), the Common Council was besieged by calls, emails and petitions by their constituents. Santa Cruz has also passed an anti-war resolution, with both the City Council and the Board of Supervisors weighing in.

Nor is this the first time that local governments have proven more rational than their national counterparts. One year ago, Berkeley was the first city council to call for an end to the bombing of Afghanistan.

### WAR THIS WINTER, PLEASE COME

Seattle resident Matthew Baldwin knows what key element Bush is missing in his attempt to sell the war on Iraq: invitations.

Baldwin has created an online "e-vite" (<http://www.defectiveyeti.com/iraqvite/>) that's addressed to all world leaders, inviting them to join the war and to RSVP ahead of time, so the U.S. knows how much pizza to order. The e-vite is signed "George" with a note to call "Dick" in his undisclosed secure location for directions to Iraq. (There's even a link to a map of Iraq.)

So far, most "countries" have weighed in with a "no," including Argentina ("Busy coming apart at the seams, maybe next year"). Currently, Great Britain is the only "yes."

# U.N. BESIEGED

## WHY IS THE U.S. PUSHING FOR DEADLOCK ON IRAQ?

BY DONALD PANETH

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. — The United Nations is a tense outpost this fall on the border between peace and war. An arc of contention extends from the Mediterranean to the south Pacific — Israel-Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan, Indonesia and the Philippines.

President George W. Bush has challenged the U.N. Security Council to enforce its resolutions against Iraq in relation to arms inspections and disarmament.

Bush has also demanded that the Council pass a strong new resolution — an ultimatum with deadlines that gives inspectors, accompanied by troops, far greater access to Iraq than previously allowed, and threatens military action if Iraq does not comply.

Igor S. Ivanov, Russia's foreign minister, said that the proposed U.S. resolution "can't be taken seriously." Arab delegates said that it was "an attempt to make war rather than peace."

Bush has been blunt. He warned as early as Sept. 17 that the United Nations risked becoming an "ineffective debating society" if the Council failed to act.

"It's time for them to determine," he said, "whether they'll be the United Nations or the League of Nations," a reference to the post-World War I international body which the United States never joined and which collapsed in non-response to a series of crises during the 1930s.

Asked Sept. 23 whether the United Nations might go the way of the League, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan replied: "We are nowhere near that."

As the United Nations attempts to thread its way through the Iraqi crisis, the issue is complicated by the Palestinian-Israeli stalemate and the United States' history of duplicity and strong-arm tactics in U.N. votes.

With the United States pushing for a resolution on Iraq, Arab nations point out the double standard on enforcing resolutions critical of Israel, which in many ways is more disdainful of U.N. authority than Iraq (see box). There is a growing sentiment that the United States seeks to act against Iraq but shield Israel.

Similar double dealing was displayed by the United States during the Iraq-Iran War of 1980-88. At that time, the United States supported Iraq, using it as a proxy to try to knock off the revolutionary government of Iran.

The United States supplied Iraq with arms and military intelligence, as well as credit and loan guarantees, which Iraq then used to purchase \$1.2 billion in American crops and other goods. In 1983, the United States removed Iraq from its list of nations supporting terrorism, making the loan guarantees possible.

Further, the United States countenanced Iraqi use of poison gas against Iran, a tactic scarcely reported at the time by American media. Iran charged that Iraq was

using cyanide, mustard and nerve gas. The charges were investigated by seven U.N. missions which found that chemical weapons had in fact been used in violation of the 1925 Geneva Protocol. Furthermore, Iran cited a rare Western news report saying that, beginning in 1984, the United States provided intelligence operatives who helped Iraq plan its mustard gas attacks on Iranian troops.

Bribery, blackmail and threats were the U.S. methods of persuasion in the 1991 Gulf War, John Pilger recalled in *The New Statesman*, Sept. 23, 2002. In 1990, Egypt was the most indebted country in Africa; Secretary of State James Baker bribed Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak with \$14 billion in "debt forgiveness." Washington gave Syria's President Hafez al-Assad the green light to wipe out opposition to Syria's rule in Lebanon.

Zaire was also offered "debt forgiveness" and military equipment for refusing requests from Cuba, Yemen and India to convene an emergency meeting of the Security Council once the attack on Iraq began.

Immediately after Yemen voted against the Council resolution to attack Iraq, a senior American diplomat informed the Yemeni ambassador: "That was the most expensive 'no' vote you ever cast." Within three days, \$70 million in U.S. aid was cut off.

The United States is aggressively hostile these days to the U.N., to international cooperation and to the U.N. Charter, which in Article 2 stipulates:

"All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state."

As of Aug. 31, the United States had not paid any of its assessed 2002 U.N. dues. It owed \$283 million to the current U.N. regular budget and \$162 million for prior years; \$17 million to international tribunals; and \$827 million to peacekeeping operations. Total U.S. debt to the United Nations was \$1.389 billion.

\* \* \*

The U.S. ship of state sails on.

I think the U.S. is determined to attack Iraq, that nothing can stop it.

I don't think that U.N. inspectors will ever return to Iraq. The United States is strongly opposed to their return, and off-stage, is working diplomatically against it.

This situation is keeping me awake nights.

So I read.

And I come back to the 1923 comic masterpiece, *The Confessions of Zeno*, by Italian novelist Italo Svevo. In the last paragraph of *The Confessions*, Svevo writes, "When all the poison gases are exhausted... There will be a tremendous explosion... and the earth will return to its nebulous state and go wandering through the sky... free at last from parasites and disease."

## TALLY OF TERROR: IRAQ VS. ISRAEL

### IRAQ



U.N. Resolutions violated, ignored: 16

Countries attacked, invaded, violated: Iran, Kuwait

Countries occupied for years: None

Countries currently occupying: None

Territory illegally annexed: None

Wars started: 1980, 1990

Possesses weapons of mass destruction: To be determined

Possesses nuclear weapons: No

Most notable atrocity against civilians: 5,000 Kurdish civilians killed with chemical weapons in the village of Halabja in March 1988; children tortured in front of their parents

Currently under a regime of U.N. sanctions: Yes

### ISRAEL



U.N. Resolutions violated, ignored: 68

Countries attacked, invaded, violated: Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Tunisia, Palestine

Countries occupied for years: Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine

Countries currently occupying: Palestine

Territory illegally annexed: Golan Heights (Syria), East Jerusalem (Palestine)

Wars started: 1956, 1967, 1982

Possesses weapons of mass destruction: Yes

Possesses nuclear weapons: Yes (up to 200 warheads)

Most notable atrocity against civilians: 17,500 Lebanese civilians killed in 1982 invasion of Lebanon

Currently under a regime of U.N. sanctions: No

FROM THE HOME OFFICE IN CRAWFORD, TEXAS...

## TOP TEN REASONS

### Bush & Company

### Want To Invade Iraq

10) The Iraqis won't just bump Saddam off themselves. "The cost of one bullet, if the Iraqi people take it on themselves is substantially less than that.... Regime change is welcome in whatever form it takes," Ari Fleisher, suggested that the Iraqi people assassinate Saddam, *The New York Times*, Oct. 2, 2002.

9) We all want war, don't we? "Our country and our Congress are now united in purpose. America is speaking with one voice: Iraq must disarm and comply with all existing U.N. resolutions, or it will be forced to comply." George W. Bush, Reuters Newswire, Oct. 12, 2002.

8) We did so well in Afghanistan, why not try another country? "The lives of Iraqi citizens would improve dramatically if Saddam Hussein were no longer in power, just as the lives of Afghanistan's citizens improved after the Taliban." Bush, Speech to the Nation, Oct. 7, 2002.

7) We can't look like a bunch of wimps. "The failure to take on Saddam after what the president [has] said would produce such a collapse of confidence in the president that it would set back the war on terrorism." Richard Perle, *Time*, Aug. 21, 2002.

6) We really, really care about the Kurds, et al. ... no, we really do. "If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will cease persecution of its civilian population, including Shi'a, Sunnis, Kurds, Turkomans and others — again as required by Security Council resolutions." Bush's speech to the United Nations, Sept. 12, 2002.

5) Osama Bin Laden = Saddam Hussein "Even if evidence does not link Iraq directly to the [Sept. 11] attack, any strategy aiming at the eradication of terrorism and its sponsors must include a determined effort to remove Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq. ... Failure to undertake such an effort will constitute an early and perhaps decisive surrender in the war on international terrorism." Perle, *Time*, Aug. 21, 2002.

4) We read history, or at least the parts that make us look good. "History is littered with cases of inaction that led to very grave consequences for the world. We just have to look back and ask how many dictators who end up being a tremendous global threat, and killing thousands, and indeed millions of people, should we have stopped in their tracks." Condoleezza Rice, BBC Radio interview, Aug. 15, 2002.

3) We've tried everything but the kitchen sink. "Nothing in the last dozen years has stopped him [Saddam]; not his solemn agreements; not the discoveries of inspectors; not the revelations by defectors; not criticism or ostracism by the international community; and not four days of bombing by the United States in 1998," Dick Cheney, speaking to Veterans of Foreign Wars, Nashville, Tenn., Aug. 26, 2002 (apparently not realizing that we never stopped bombing Iraq).

2) It's a Hamlet thing. "Other countries of course, bear the same risk. But there's no doubt his hatred is mainly directed at us.... After all, this is the guy who tried to kill my dad." Bush, Agence France-Presse, Sept. 27, 2002.

1) If we don't, our world's going to end. "With every step the Iraqi regime takes toward gaining and deploying the most terrible weapons, our own options to confront that regime will narrow. And if an emboldened regime were to supply these weapons to terrorist allies, then the attacks of September 11th would be a prelude to far greater horrors." Bush's speech to the United Nations, Sept. 12, 2002.

— Emily Reinhardt

# MEDIA FOG MACHINE SHROUDS AFGHAN CASUALTIES

BY CHRIS ANDERSON

The war in Afghanistan has largely faded from the public eye. That is in part due to the Bush Administration and media's obsession with Iraq, as well as the relative dearth of images from the conflict.

If the first Gulf War was defined by the image of a supersonic missile plowing into a building, the war in Afghanistan brought few comparable pictures. What happened during the actual war — how many civilians died, the question of war crimes by U.S. and Northern Alliance troops and even if the war ever really ended — is virtually absent in the mainstream media.

## ON THE GROUND IN AFGHANISTAN

Regarding the number of dead civilians, *The New York Times* stated on Oct. 13, "Estimates by journalists put the figure at 400 to 1,500."

Yet a comprehensive tally compiled by Marc Herold puts the minimum number of civilian deaths in Afghanistan at 3,215 — as opposed to 2,819 killed in the Sept. 11 attacks.

Herold, a professor of economics at the University of New Hampshire, is blunt: the thousands of Afghani dead stem from "the apparent willingness of U.S. military strategists to fire missiles ... into heavily populated areas of Afghanistan." He goes on to argue that "actions speak and words [can] obscure: the hollowness of pious pronouncements by Rumsfeld, Rice and the compliant corporate media about the great care to minimize collateral damage is clear for all to see."

Most of the attacks, available in hundreds of pages of charts at cursor.org, don't even list a casualty total. Of the ones that do list death tolls, many of the numbers are in brackets. Herold writes that the accounts may be suspect or the killed may have been military casualties, so he doesn't include the bracketed numbers in his total.

Sifting through "A Dossier on Civilian Victims of United States Aerial Bombing" it becomes clear that Herold is conservative both in his methodology and conclusions. Most of his sources come from the Western media, like the BBC, Reuters, AP, *The Independent*, *Wall*

*Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, the regional press — mostly the Indian and Pakistani press, both of which are generally well regarded — and occasionally from the Taliban's former press agency.

But Herold's analysis is either ignored — hence the *Times'* "estimates by journalists" — or his sources criticized.

Ian Murray, a columnist with Tech Central Station, www.techcentralstation.com, claims Herold's study is the victim of Taliban propaganda, a reliance on "non-Western" media sources like Pakistani and Indian papers, double counting and simple inaccuracy.

A "review of [Herold's] data," argues Murray, "suggests that ... only 1,100" civilians were killed.

Herold states in response: "A weakness of the [original] study — since corrected — was some double counting due to confused site names. The database has been continually updated, corrected and now incorporates civilian deaths resulting from British and U.S. special forces attacks."

Also, contends Herold, solely relying on Western media outlets is itself biased as it strengthens "a pernicious view in the United States that the truth can only come from a Euro-American lens."

Unlike the other studies, by Reuters, AP, *The New York Times* and Global Exchange, Herold's database includes raw data and does not rely on statistical sampling.

The question of war crimes committed by the United States and its proxy allies against enemy combatants has been largely ignored.

According to a June 14 report in *The Scotsman*, a recent documentary shot in Afghanistan by Jamie Doran shows that "U.S. soldiers took part in the torture of Taliban prisoners and may have had a role in the 'disappearance' of around 3,000 men in Mazar-i-Sharif."

Surviving prisoners were held at the Qala-i-Janghi prison, where they revolted on Nov. 25. The U.S. responded with a massive bombing operation of the fort for days, killing at least 400 prisoners. At the time, Pentagon chief Donald Rumsfeld publicly called for the prisoners to be killed — a clear violation of the Geneva Conventions.

When reporters entered the compound, many of the dead were found with their hands tied behind their backs. In another incident on Jan. 24, U.S. forces killed more than 20 Afghans, saying they were Taliban. It turned out the dead were just villagers and at least two of them also had their hands bound behind their back, "fuelling suspicion that they were handcuffed and then executed," in the words of the London *Guardian* last February.

One observer, Marc Cogen, a Professor of International Law at Ghent University, says that "taking on terrorist suspects by military force, particularly by way of air strikes, puts the civilian population at high risk since terrorists have no uniforms, shield themselves blending into the civilian population and have no clearly visible targets."

## GULF WAR REDUX

Few analysts are willing to estimate how many U.S. soldiers might be killed in a second Gulf War, and have been even less interested as to how many Iraqi civilians might die. Predictions made prior to the first Gulf War tended to overestimate the number of U.S. deaths and grossly underestimate the number of civilians killed.

One estimate has been provided by Brookings Institute senior fellow Michael O'Hanlon. Testifying before Congress on Oct. 2, he estimated that between 2,000 and 50,000 Iraqi soldiers could be killed in an invasion of Iraq, "and civilian deaths could number in the tens of thousands as well." The impact of urban fighting would substantially increase the likelihood of civilian deaths, and "this possible outcome, shown graphically on television around the region, could put considerable pressure on the United States," O'Hanlon argued rather blandly.

The exact number of innocent civilians that were killed in Afghanistan (and that may be killed in Iraq) might be less important than the unwillingness of the government and the media to discuss the matter at all. We cannot hope for an accurate answer to that perennial post-Sept. 11 question — why do they hate us? — without an honest knowledge and understanding of what it is that we have done.

# CHAOS RECLAIMS AFGHANISTAN

## REST OF WORLD RENEGES ON AID PROMISES

BY DONALD PANETH

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. — How are things proceeding in Afghanistan — that extraordinary victim of the world's animus and brutality? A year after the United States' bombardment, reports reaching here from United Nations agencies tell of a country struggling to recover from a devastating attack.

The country is littered with landmines and other ordnance. Food, water and medical supplies are scarce.

Infrastructure — roads and bridges, housing and schools — has still to be restored.

Security is a key issue, and remains fragile; warlords and their armies continue to clash.

In Kabul, where a central government operates, the conditions are somewhat better. The streets are patrolled by 4,000 troops of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Western nations have been asked to expand ISAF beyond Kabul, but have not moved in that direction.

In the shops of Kabul, toothpaste and breakfast cereals and Idaho potatoes are again available, says Yusuf Hassan, external relations officer, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Restaurants have reopened. Japanese cars may be purchased. "But this is not replicated elsewhere in Afghanistan," he says.

Hassan served three years as UNHCR and then as U.N. spokesman in Kabul. During his stint, he traveled extensively outside the capitol. "Movement was difficult," he recalls.

"At the moment, eastern and northern Afghanistan are flashpoints for conflict between warlords," Hassan says.

Security for U.N. personnel is a problem.

Early this year, Western donors promised \$4.5 billion in aid to Afghanistan over five years. But that commitment is lagging.

"The big picture has improved," says Khaled Mansour, public affairs officer for the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP), "but nobody should be fooled. This is not a short-term undertaking. This will take years."

The problem of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) continues to be enormous. As of Sept. 27, 1.7 million Afghans had returned from neighboring countries to Afghanistan. A total of 1.5 million returned from Pakistan, and 210,448 from Iran. The rest of the returnees came from central Asian countries.

The number of IDPs is 926,000.

UNHCR hopes to build 40,000 housing units to shelter about 300,000 people. So far, some 22,000 units have either been completed or are under construction, mainly in central Afghanistan.

WFP is operating 24 bakeries in Kabul. Run by 360 women, the bakeries produce nearly 42,000 loaves of bread daily. Arifa is a typical worker. Six years ago, her village in the Shomali Plains was severely damaged by conflict. She took her eight children and fled to Kabul where she expected to meet her husband. He never appeared.

For the last two years, Arifa has been working in bakery #7 in war-torn district #5. Every day, with the help of other women, she bakes bread which helps feed many of her neighbors. The air of decay in the neighborhood around the

bakery indicates the forlorn conditions in which most households still live, in the capital and across Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, temperatures are already falling, and there have been reports of snow in the mountains. Parts of northern Afghanistan become impassable in the winter.

Despite a recovery in agricultural production, "millions of Afghans, particularly pastoralist Kuchis, have little or no access to food," the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and WFP said.

An estimated 85,000 Kuchi households in southern Afghanistan have lost 50 to 70 percent of their livestock.

A total of 6 million people will require food assistance during the next year, the FAO and WFP also reported. "The effects of successive years of drought, deteriorating irrigation and other infrastructure, the inability of farmers to access necessary agricultural inputs, lack of employment within and outside agriculture, and a vicious rural indebtedness render a timely and effective intervention essential," the agencies said.

Lakhdar Brahimi, the U.N. Secretary-General's special representative for Afghanistan, recently told the Security Council that Afghan President Hamid Karzai's transitional administration does not have the resources either for its basic budget or for infrastructure projects. Such projects could create jobs, improve economic prospects and stimulate foreign investment, he said.

Brahimi also stressed that Afghanistan requires the sustained and generous support of the international community.

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## WAR PROFITEERS

Who stands to profit from a war with Iraq? The Bush administration and its friends, of course. After the first Iraq war, Vice President Dick Cheney's ex-employer, Halliburton, made almost \$24 million rebuilding Iraqi oil fields. Having recently received a \$9 million contract — which could be expanded to \$300 million — from Cheney chum Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld to build more prison cells at the Guantanamo Bay naval base, Halliburton is in the best position to clean up the mess left from military action in Iraq.

Not to be left out of the war spoils is the Carlyle Group, a Washington-based venture capital consortium stacked with government all-stars, including George Bush I. According to a Sept. 29th report in the U.K. *Observer*, the British government plans to sell its top weapons defense lab to the firm, now headed by Frank Carlucci, a Reagan-era defense secretary and CIA deputy director. The program, called QinetiQ, produces top-secret weapons hardware such as plastic tanks that can evade radar detection and low-cost mini spy satellites for use by the army and private companies.

## NORTH KOREAN NUKE: BUSH SAYS NO BIG DEAL

The White House's muted response to North Korea's surprise announcement of an active nuclear weapons program has lead some to question the sincerity of the administration's reasoning for rushing to war with Iraq. North Korea told U.S. diplomats on Oct. 4 that it has had a bomb program in operation since the early 1990s. A CIA report added that North Korea likely has enough plutonium to assemble two nuclear bombs immediately, if it has not already done so. In Iraq, unverified allegations of weapons lead the list of reasons for war, perhaps within the next few months. However, with Korea, whose 1.7 million-man army and array of missiles and attack craft make it much stronger than Iraq, the White House is "avoiding a crisis atmosphere," according to a senior U.S. official quoted in the *New York Times*. Further questions were raised when it was revealed that Pakistan, a close U.S. ally in the war on terror, was the chief supplier of technology for the North Korean bomb program, even after Sept. 11.

## INS EXPANDS FINGER-PRINTING OF MUSLIM IMMIGRANTS

Coming to the U.S. from Europe? No problem. Enjoy your stay.

Coming from a Muslim country? You've got problems.

The Justice Department recently expanded INS "registration" of Muslim men from age 16 to 45 to include fingerprinting. This new "axis of evil" includes Afghanistan, Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Malaysia, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen, plus Cuba and North Korea. Visitors from these countries are interviewed, photographed and fingerprinted on arrival to the United States. Anyone staying over a month is required to report any changes in his job, address or school. The INS warns that "registered" visitors who don't report will be "subject to arrest ... or removal from the United States."

The Saudi government is considering returning the favor. The U.S. embassy recently warned that Saudi Arabia may begin fingerprinting all U.S. visitors and shorten visas for U.S. tourists.



## "I've Been to Bali Too"

### AUSSIE REFLECTS ON TERRORIST ATTACK IN TROPICAL PARADISE

*Editors' Note: This story first appeared on the Melbourne IMC web site on Oct. 13, the day after a terrorist attack killed at least 187 people in Bali.*

BY LISA FARRELL

There's a well-known Redgum song in Australia titled "I've been to Bali too." "Wired home for money, short of cash; A dose of Bali belly and a tropical rash; Daddy came through — American express; Bali t-shirts magic mushrooms Redgum bootlegs, I've been to Bali too" go the lyrics.

Bali has a special place in the hearts of many Australians. Two-week holidays are cheaper there for most Australians than traveling interstate — and the shopping! Well, those locals really know how to please us Aussies.

Bali epitomises the global consumerist culture. A tiny island in the Indonesian archipelago, its entire social fabric has been altered by Western tourism. The handicraft sector is now completely tourist-oriented, as is about 80 percent of employment on the island.

How do I know all this? Because I've been to Bali too — three times in fact — the first time as a very naive, very white, middle-class, Australian 14-year-old.

Australia is shocked by the events of the last 24 hours... Why us? Our dear footballers! The horror of it!

We're being plied with images of "our own" running down the streets, blood pouring down faces, skin peeling off bodies.

Yes, it's horrid. But so was the drowning of 353 refugees off the coast of Australia one year ago, while our government sat by and watched. Not only watched, but blamed those trying to save their children for "throwing them overboard."

This time, however, our government has jumped to the defence of innocents. Our Prime Minister, John Howard has promised "all of the resources of the Air Force will be available for this task," of bringing the injured back to Australia for treatment.

How blatant is our government's treatment of some lives as more important than others? Forbes Rugby Club President Mr. McKinnon explained today how important it was to get injured Australians home, because "he wouldn't admit his dog to the hospital he was treated in."

The most worrying thing about these events, though, is our government's ability to use them to distort facts, and to justify its slavish support for the U.S.-led "war on terror."

Already, Howard is talking of a national review of security measures against terrorism. There are constant reminders that this, or something like it, could happen to any of us, anywhere, any time. If only some of us could remember that this has been the lot of most of the world's population under imperialism for over a century.

In practice, this means the tightening of immigration border controls and even harsher treatment for refugees (who have become one of the Australian targets of the "war on terror"), a bolstering of the proposed terror laws in Australia, and most importantly, a huge push for the war in the Gulf.

As demonstrated by 40,000 on the streets of Melbourne today, however, not all Australians back this war.

Amid the current hysteria, Indonesian national police chief General Da'i Bachtiar is even claiming that "this is the worst act of terror in Indonesia's history."

We have such short memories.

It was only a few decades ago that the Indonesian government, enthusiastically cheered on by Australia, the U.S. and Western Europe, massacred up to a million people as part of the coup that installed the hated Suharto regime.

Sorry — not just cheered, but advised, armed and even directed. Because every Western corporation and government wanted a piece of the Indonesian pie — a large, poor population that could supply a pliant working class for their global sweatshops.

Indonesian president Megawati Sukarnoputri said today that at least 182 people have been killed in the car bombing, and 132 others injured.

This is clearly a significant loss of life, but the Australian government and media will be turning this tragic event into a propaganda war — especially if any footballers lose their lives, because we Aussies "love our football."

When I was last in Bali, just after the Asian economic crisis of 1997, the holiday isle had changed significantly. The desperation of small handicraft sellers was apparent. Our dollar literally increased five-fold against theirs within months.

The locals were prevented from accessing foreign exchange to prevent a run on rupiah. As a tourist, I didn't even have to exchange my money, because an Australian dollar was worth more to them than any rupiah.

I remember talking to a 16-year-old Indonesian from Jakarta. He was one of the many traveling to and from Bali to find stores selling the wares of factories based elsewhere in the Archipelago. We talked about the Sari Hotel and why it was that he wasn't let into the club, even though age limits were not enforced on the island.

I explained that the doorman did not let in any locals, and that this appeared to be especially so after the economic crisis. He did not believe me, because it was beyond his comprehension that locals couldn't mix with tourists. He could not understand why people could travel to another country and not want to know the "locals." To be quite honest, neither could I. And it's the last time I could stomach being a tourist in Bali.

The Sari nightclub was not simply a random target. It may be a hated symbol of Western imperialism for many. Every year, thousands travel to the island, stay in their Western Hotels, visit their Western nightclubs, flaunt their money and feel like royalty for two weeks, then travel home to a country which supports the repressive regimes of the world, like their very own in Indonesia.

As the Sex Pistols put it, it's "a cheap holiday in other people's misery."

That's not to say I support what happened last night. But let's be clear. As long as our governments continue to wage war on the world's poor and working class — whether through economic, diplomatic or military means — our government will develop enemies, enemies which unfortunately mistake us for our governments.



# HOLLYWOOD: WAR IS FUN!

BY CHRIS FLEISHER

Francois Truffaut once suggested that anti-war movies do not exist. All war movies, he claimed, make combat look fun.

The limb-ripping frenzy that seems to thread through every war movie since *Braveheart* makes a strong opposing argument to Truffaut, but few of today's directors could convincingly argue that they've done anything to tarnish the gleam of war.

When *Black Hawk Down* was released in mid-January, it opened to rave reviews. The movie depicted Americans losing a battle to Somalia, a Third World nation, and was described as "a triumph of pure filmmaking" (*L.A. Times*), "a war film of prodigious power" (*Rolling Stone*), and "truthful" (*The New Yorker*).

Anti-war film? Hardly. The Americans may have been the giant invading a foreign land but for 143 minutes director Ridley Scott intended to take us into the horror of war and honor the Americans that engaged in it.

We watch an idealistic Josh Harnett "come of age," a battered Tom Sizemore counsel the younger troops under duress, and a dead helicopter pilot paraded through the streets by Somali "savages." We are expected to understand what's happening here on every emotional level, walk away with a respectful sense of awe, and never ask the question, "Why?"

Politics has rarely been integral to the plots of war movies produced in the past decade. *Saving Private Ryan* might reference the PR politics behind the rescue operation and *Courage Under Fire* the gender politics that threatened to deny a woman the Medal of Honor.

And, as an afterthought, *Black Hawk Down* suggests that policy makers might have had something to do with



the misguided mission in Somalia. But the notion is strikingly absent from the final chapter honoring the Americans who died in the battle.

Directors aren't the only ones ignoring political context. Many critics, like Roger Ebert, prefer cinematic artistry and character pathos to politics. "Films like this," Ebert wrote of *Black Hawk Down*, "... help the audience understand and sympathize with the actual experiences of combat troops." Ebert, of course, assumes that we should sympathize with the soldiers without acknowledging why they were fighting.

*We Were Soldiers* is the most amnesiac of all. The movie depicts the most politically-charged war in American history, Vietnam. But again, Hollywood fears politics and welcomes the drama of the soldier's story. "I

wonder what Custer was thinking," Lt. Col. Hal Moore (Mel Gibson) says, "when he realized he'd moved his men into slaughter." Sgt. Major Plumley (Sam Elliott) replies, "Sir, Custer was a pussy. You're no pussy." Very insightful, Sgt. Major...now let's wax those Commie bastards.

Of course, the Commie bastards are not actually waxed and, as we know, the Americans go on to lose the war. But Mel is still a hero, just as he was when he died in *Braveheart*. Also, like Tom Hanks in *Saving Private Ryan*, the Rangers in *Black Hawk Down*, Meg Ryan in *Courage Under Fire*, or even Russell Crowe in *Gladiator*, the hero doesn't see the triumphal end.

Tragic heroes are very in-vogue.

Given the critical success of movies such as *Braveheart*, *Saving Private Ryan* and *Black Hawk Down*, critics are not bothered by, and, in fact, seem to welcome the unflawed tragic hero. Out with ambiguity, we want to believe in somebody and honor them as martyrs.

*Behind Enemy Lines*, the first war movie to be released post-Sept. 11, evokes another formula we're used to in Hollywood: winner-takes-all. Capitalizing on the patriotic fervor, *Lines* raked in \$18.736 million on its first weekend, with its *Top Gun*-influenced reckless heroes and incompetent villains.

"With its hip-hip-hooray tone and pumped-up patriotic volume," wrote Kenneth Turan of the *L.A. Times*, "*Behind Enemy Lines* may prove particularly suited to these increasingly bellicose times."

Though Turan criticized the movie's jingoism (calling it "a film that might as well be called 'Top Gun Goes to Bosnia'") he and other critics seemed more annoyed with the film's conventional story rather than the unchecked patriotic fervor.

"The movie recycles the old howler," Roger Ebert wrote of *Behind Enemy Lines*, "where hundreds of rounds of ammo miss the hero, but all he has to do is aim and fire, and — pow! another bad guy jerks back, dead." C'mon villains, nail him!

Gone are the days when we declared a war on a political ideology. Today, we declare war on the emotional state of "terror," decrying the violence that ensues while honoring the tragic heroes who emerge from the fire.

This is not to say that all recent war movies adhere to this formula. *Three Kings* is a notable exception, and is, perhaps, the only true anti-war film made in the last fifteen years. Though well received by critics, most preferred to concentrate on the film's "frenetic visual style" (*L.A. Times*) and the "grainy, washed-out colour scheme that perfectly complements its milieu" (*Urban Cinefile*) rather than the political questions it raised. How could it have raised any questions? The heroes don't endure hails of gunfire or drown gurgling their own blood.

Sylvester Stallone recently proposed a new Rambo project to begin shooting next year. Our 1980s antidote to Vietnam will once again throw himself into the fray for U.S. interests, but what will be his cause? Given Hollywood's apolitical tendencies, cause is irrelevant, so long as the opposition doesn't speak and our hero dies fighting for God and country.

## FORWARD COMMAND Playhouse



Barbie goes commando!

Shell-eaten walls, rounds of ammo, miniature rifles, semi-automatic weapons and bazookas... the dollhouse has gone through some major remodeling for this season. This toy, Forward Command Post, was available at JC Penny's, KB Toys and E-Toys on-line catalogs, but has been removed from all three after press coverage questioned the tastefulness of the toy. The house is still available for purchase at \$44.99, not assembled, for children 5 and up. Malibu Stacy's Desert Foxhole is still on the drawing boards.

Here is what J.C. Penney's says about this product:

Forward Command Post

Take command of your soldiers from this fully outfitted battlezone. 75-piece set includes one 11 1/2" H figurine in military combat gear, toy weapons, American flag, chairs and more.

Assembled dimensions: 32x16x32" H.

Plastic. 10 lbs. Ages 5 and up.

\$44.99

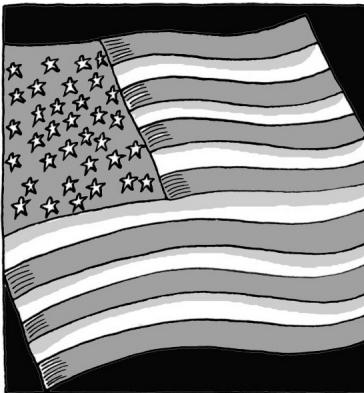
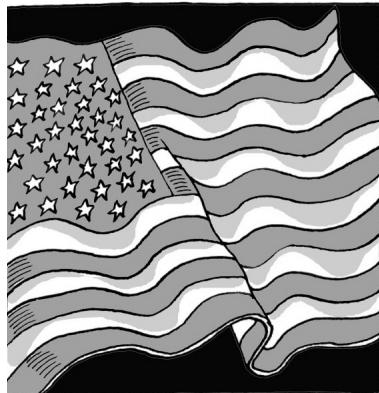
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## EL INDEPENDIENTE



## ¡NO A LA GUERRA!



Mientras el gobierno de Estados Unidos se prepara para atacar Irak, crece la oposición a los planes bélicos. El 6 de octubre se produjo en Central Park la mayor movilización contra la guerra. Participaron más de veinte mil personas, entre ellos latinos de Washington Heights, del Barrio, de Brooklyn. En Washington, aunque el Senado y el Congreso apoyaron los planes de Bush, los dos congresistas hispanos de Nueva York, Nydia Velazquez y José Serrano, votaron por el No. A sus oficinas, como a la de otros congresistas y senadores llegaron miles de cartas repudiando la guerra. En una encuesta del diario Hoy, el 62.7 por ciento de los participantes votaron en contra de la guerra. A quiénes favorece esta guerra? A la industria armamentista, a las grandes corporaciones, las petroleras en especial, y a sus representantes dentro de la administración Bush. Esta es una guerra planeada por hombres ricos, para llevarla a cabo con soldados de origen humilde, y que si se concreta, causará la muerte de muchos inocentes.

## Zapping

R JUAN GELMAN

Bush hijo cambia varias veces de canal cuando de Iraq se trata. Dijo que era preciso invadirlo por sus conexiones con Osama bin Laden, aunque la CIA reitera que no hay evidencias que lo prueben. En cambio, ha documentado los contactos con Al-Qaida de petroleros sauditas y servicios paquistaneses sin que a nadie en la Casa Blanca se le ocurriera bombardear Karachi o Riyadh. Y luego: que Bagdad posee armas químicas de destrucción masiva, aunque inspectores que integraron la misión de Naciones Unidas que abandonó Iraq en 1998 señalan una y otra vez que ese arsenal fue destruido casi por completo. O que Saddam está a punto de conseguir bombas nucleares, aunque el organismo de energía atómica de la ONU desechó tal posibilidad. El cambio de canal más importante, sin embargo, se produjo en menos de un año: Bush hijo le quitó a Bin Laden la antorcha de Enemigo Público Número Uno y se la pasó al autócrata iraquí.

El habitante del Salón Oval había proclamado después de los atentados del 11/9: "Quiero justicia. Recuerdo un viejo cartel del Oeste que decía 'Buscado: vivo o muerto'". Se refería, claro, a Osama. Pero el millonario saudita no sólo ha desaparecido de Afganistán, también del discurso buschano. Bin Laden sigue primero en la lista de 22 terroristas más buscados y encabeza la de los diez prófugos más requeridos por los servicios estadounidenses, pero la ofensiva militar que Washington desató el 7 de octubre del 2001 no culminó con su captura, ni vivo ni muerto. Los sondeos de opinión muestran que ese hecho divide a los norteamericanos. Una reciente encuesta de Gallup reveló que un 50 por ciento de la población considera que la intervención en Afganistán "sólo será un éxito" cuando se atrape a Bin Laden, contra un 38 por ciento que se declara satisfecho aunque tal cosa no ocurra. Un sondeo de Harris encontró que este último índice ascendía al 47 por ciento hace cuatro meses.

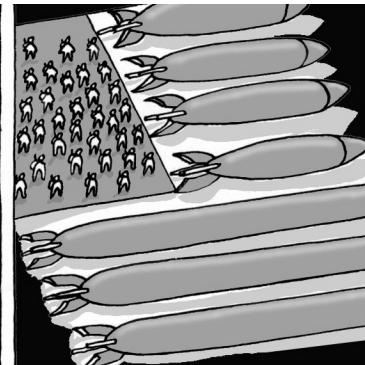
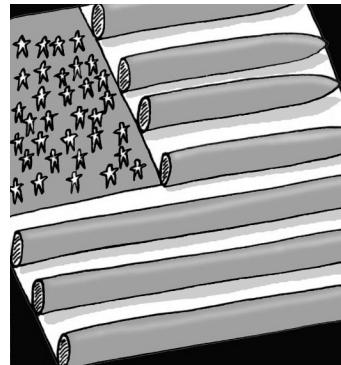
Pero la cuestión, hoy, es Iraq. Y cabe recordar un informe que, a principios del año pasado, Bush hijo encargó al influyente Council of Foreign Relations de Washington, del que son miembros, entre otros, el

vicepresidente Dick Cheney y ex secretarios de Estado como Henry Kissinger y James Baker. Se titula "Retos estratégicos de la política energética en el siglo XXI", subraya que esa industria padece en EE.UU. "el comienzo de sus limitaciones en materia de capacidad", señala que es urgente solucionar

la previsible disminución del abastecimiento de petróleo para evitar que se acentúen la recesión económica y la in tranquilidad social en el país, y urge a Bush hijo a evaluar con otra mirada "el papel de la energía en la política exterior estadounidense", ya que el acceso al oro negro "es un imperativo de seguridad".

El informe aconseja dar "pasos inmediatos" para acelerar el acceso yanqui a los yacimientos de la cuenca del mar Caspio, y destaca la necesidad de aumentar la producción petrolera de Iraq a fin de no sufrir la escasez prevista. No descarta el empleo de medios diplomáticos para lograr esos objetivos, pero tampoco la posibilidad de intervenciones militares. En otras palabras, se trata del libreto de la intervención en Afganistán y de la guerra contra Iraq. El informe fue redactado hace más de un año y medio, meses antes del 11/9, y Washington lo aplicó con rudeza y cierta despropósito para el bolsillo de los conocidos de siempre.

Moscú observa el panorama con preocupación notoria. Se inclina ahora por una nueva resolución de Naciones Unidas que imponga a Iraq condiciones más duras de inspección de sus arsenales, pero rechaza que éstas sean inaceptables y que vengan acompañadas de la amenaza del uso de la fuerza, como quiere Bush hijo. El nerviosismo ruso se explica y no sólo por la deuda de 7 mil millones de dólares que Hussein contrajo con la ex URSS: Lukoil, la mayor empresa petrolera del país, firmó un contrato de explotación de yacimientos petrolíferos iraquíes por un valor de 20 mil millones de



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dólares, y se estima en 90 mil millones de dólares el beneficio potencial de la concesión que obtuvo el gigante ruso Zarabzhneft. Putin teme que la caída de Hussein provoque la anulación de contratos tan jugosos. Imagina -no sin razón- que la voracidad estadounidense de energéticos marginará a Rusia en el control del oro negro iraquí.

Llama la atención que, en el plano político, la Casa Blanca no dí al parecer muestras de diseñar planes sucesorios. La semana pasada, el secretario de Defensa Donald Rumsfeld no vaciló en responder al periodista que le preguntaba si podía garantizar que el próximo gobierno de Iraq sería mejor que el de Hussein: "No hay muchas garantías en la vida". Pero Tom Lantos, representante demócrata de California, confió a Colette Avital, del Partido Laborista de Israel, que visitaba el Capitolio: "Ustedes (los israelíes) no tendrán ningún problema con Saddam. Pronto nos lo sacaremos de encima. Y en su lugar instalaremos a un dictador pro-occidental, lo que será bueno para nosotros y para ustedes", registró el diario israelí Haaretz en su edición del 1º de octubre. Avital preguntó a Lantos cómo se podía hablar de entronizar a un dictador en Iraq y al mismo tiempo exigir "reformas democráticas" en los territorios palestinos como condición previa a la reanudación del proceso de paz. Se puede, se puede.

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